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# **A Genetic Analysis of Miklós Szentkuthy's *Prae***

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ACADEMIC DISSERTATION

To be publicly discussed, by due permission of the Faculty of Arts  
at the University of Helsinki (Metsätalo building, Unioninkatu 40)  
in lecture room 4, on the 12<sup>th</sup> of April, 2014, at 10 o'clock.

ISBN 978-952-10-9794-2 (paperback)  
ISBN 978-952-10-9795-9 (PDF)

Unigrafia  
Helsinki 2014

Cover image *Cannes à l'aube* by Bálint Erdei  
[www.erdeibalint.com](http://www.erdeibalint.com)

## Abstract

This thesis reconstructs the genesis of Miklós Szentkuthy's (1908–1988) novel *Prae* (1934). The thesis examines previously unknown documents, discovered in the archives of the Petőfi Literary Museum in Budapest, which include the manuscript of *Prae*, drafts of *Prae*, diary notes, marginal notes in Szentkuthy's books, and letters and postcards. Although this material has been available to scholars, it has never been studied or commented upon. Drawing on the concepts and methodological tools of genetic criticism, this thesis presents the archival material, establishes a writing process chronology, and distinguishes three principal techniques in Szentkuthy's writing method.

Szentkuthy wrote *Prae* between the years 1928–34 by a gradual accumulation of portions of text. His writing process can be divided into five stages: First (autumn 1928–October 1931), he wrote the core of part 1, then (late 1931–March 1932) the core of part 2. Next (April 1932–late 1932), he completed part 1 with three lengthy additions and finished part 2. In the following stage (December 1932–May 1933), Szentkuthy wrote the core of part 3. In the final stage (May 1933–April 1934), he also corrected the entire manuscript and attached more than one hundred additions to it. The additions introduced new thematic material to the manuscript. As a result, the seemingly uniform text of *Prae* actually consists of two thematically different layers: the main text and the additions. Other characteristics of Szentkuthy's writing include “obscuring suppression” and “immediate absorption.” The technique of obscuring suppression consists of the deletion of portions of material due to which the final text (the published novel) becomes more concise but also less understandable than its draft. The principle of immediate absorption is spontaneous and immediate incorporation of readerly and personal experiences into the text that a writer is working on.

As the first doctoral dissertation devoted to *Prae*, this thesis also demonstrates how knowledge of the novel's genesis can be utilized in future research on Szentkuthy's novel. Firstly, researchers will be able to take into account the thematic distinction between the main text and the additions. Secondly, the thesis shows that it is worth studying drafts as they might provide much richer and more informative material than the printed text. Thirdly, comparing parts of the novel to books that Szentkuthy read simultaneously to the writing of the given fragments may lead to the discovery of new unknown sources of *Prae*.

## Abstract in Hungarian (Magyar nyelvű összefoglalás)

### Szentkuthy Miklós *Prae* című művének genetikai elemzése

Disszertációmban arra vállalkozom, hogy Szentkuthy Miklós (1908–1988) *Prae* (1934) című regényének a keletkezéstörténetét rekonstruáljam a Petőfi Irodalmi Múzeumban felfedezett, korábban ismeretlen levéltári dokumentumok alapján. Az elemzett anyag, amely hozzáférhető volt a kutatók számára korábban is, de a mai napig nem volt kutatások tárgya, a *Prae* kéziratából, vázlatokból, naplószerű jegyzetekből, Szentkuthy könyveiben található széljegyzetekből, levelekből és képeslapokból áll. Disszertációmban a genetikai kritika fogalmi és módszertani eszközeinek a segítségével bemutatom a levéltári anyagot, meghatározom a *Prae* keletkezési folyamatának a kronológiáját és megkülönböztetem Szentkuthy három fő írástechnikáját.

Szentkuthy 1928 és 1934 között írta meg a *Prae*-t a szövegek mennyiségének fokozatos növelésével. Kutatásaim alapján megállapítható, hogy az írási folyamatot öt fázisra lehet osztani. Szentkuthy 1928 ősze és 1931 októbere között írta az első rész törzsszövegét, a másodikát pedig 1931 vége és 1932 márciusa között. A harmadik szakaszban – 1932 áprilisától ugyanazon év végéig – három hosszabb betoldással egészítette ki az első részt és befejezte a másodikat. A következő fázisban, amely 1932 decemberétől 1933 májusáig tartott, a *Prae* harmadik részének törzsanyaga készült el. Az utolsó szakaszban – 1933 májusa és 1934 áprilisa között – az író kijavította az egész kéziratot, és több mint száz betoldással egészítette ki. A betoldások új tematikus anyagot vezettek be a kéziratba. Így a *Prae* látszólag egységes szövege tulajdonképpen két tematikusan eltérő rétegből áll: a főszövegből és a hozzáfűzött betoldásokból. Szentkuthy írásmódjának egyéb jellemző tulajdonságai az „elhomályosító törlés” és az „azonnali beívódás.” Az elhomályosító törlés technikája abban áll, hogy az író az anyag egy részét törli, aminek következményeképpen a végső szöveg tömörebbé válik, de ugyanakkor kevésbé érthető, mint a vázlat. Az azonnali beívódásnak pedig az a lényege, hogy az írónak az olvasói és a személyes élményei spontán és közvetlen módon beívódnak abba a szövegrészbe, amelyen éppen dolgozik.

Dolgozatom az első doktori disszertáció, amely a *Prae*-ről szól, így az az egyik fontos feladata, hogy megmutassa a regény keletkezéséről szerzett tudás felhasználási lehetőségeit a további *Prae*-kutatásban. A kutatók egyrészt figyelembe vehetik majd a főszöveg és a betoldások közötti tematikus eltérést. Másrészt a tézis rámutat arra, hogy érdemes tanulmányozni a vázlatokat is, mivel sokkal gazdagabb és hasznosabb anyagot nyújthatnak, mint a nyomtatott szöveg magában. Harmadrészt a jövőbeni kutatások új forrásokat fedezhetnek fel, ha összevetik a regény részeit azokkal a könyvekkel, amelyeket Szentkuthy az adott részek megírásával egyidejűleg olvasott.

## Acknowledgements

First and foremost, I would like to thank Mariella Legnani (born Marion Pfisterer), Miklós Szentkuthy's only daughter, for her support, kindness, and for her granting permission to publish Szentkuthy's drafts and notes.

I would also like to thank Mária Tompa for introducing me to Szentkuthy's world, for her support, lengthy discussions, and for permission to publish the archival material. I also wish to thank the Director of the Petőfi Literary Museum, Csilla E. Csorba, for permission to publish the images of Szentkuthy's drafts and notes.

I would like to thank my pre-examinators, Tibor Gintli and Satu Grünthal, for their valuable and constructive comments on my work. I owe a debt of gratitude to my supervisors, Magdolna Kovács and Harri Veivo, without whom I would not have been able to complete this thesis. I would also like to thank Éva Gerevich-Kopteff and Eero Tarasti for helping me in the early stages of my work.

I am also greatly indebted to the staff of PIM: Katalin Hegyi, Katalin Varga, Ágnes Vajda, and especially Mária Gróf and Irma Szilágyi who always helped me to find the material I was looking for.

I would like to express my gratitude to the leaders of the seminar in literature at the University of Helsinki, Hannu Riikonen and Heta Pyrhönen, guest professors Irene Kacandes, Philippe Carrard, Sander Gilman, Suzanne Keen, as well as all of the students who participated in the seminar in the years 2009–2012.

I am indebted to Rainer J. Hanshe for his enthusiasm, for the language proofreading, and for his valuable last minute comments. I am also grateful to other Szentkuthy scholars, including József J. Fekete and Péter Bálint, for their support. I would like to thank Tim Wilkinson for permission to quote from his translations, and Arto Kilpiö for his help with administrative issues. My research was funded by Helsingin yliopiston tiedesäätiö, CIMO, Magyar Ösztöndíj Bizottság, the Chancellor's Travel Grant, and the University of Helsinki.

I am indebted to my first teachers of Hungarian from the department of Hungarian Studies at the University of Warsaw: Márta Gedeon, Ildikó Kozak, and Elżbieta Szawerdo, as well as to Elżbieta Cygielska, who always encouraged my passion for Hungarian literature.

I am grateful to my family members for their ceaseless help: my parents Magda and Zbyszek Sikorscy, my grand parents Maria Natanson, Wiktor Natanson, Irena Sikorska, and the late Bogusław Chabros, my aunt Elżbieta Sikorska, as well as the the rest of my family in Canada and England.

I would like to thank my friends for their incessant support and inspiration: Péter Cserne, Paulina Kwiatkowska, Heini Lehtonen, Grisell Macdonel, Martyna Markowska, Anna Serfőző and Viktória Szabó. My special thanks go to Bálint Erdei for the cover picture, and for his friendship. I also wish to thank Mateusz Falkowski and Tomi Kokkonen for their advice concerning Heidegger, Santeri Junttila for sharing his work space with me, Hanna Karhu for her advice and optimism, Dezső Tóth for a copy of the first edition of *Prae*, and Anna Révész for proofreading the Hungarian abstract.

Finally, I would like to thank Simo Muir, without whose constant support and advice I would not have been able to complete this thesis.

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## List of Abbreviations

- AK* = Szentkuthy, Miklós. *Az alázat kalendáriuma (1935–1936)* [The almanac of humility (1935–1936)]. Edited by Mária Tompa. Budapest: Magvető, 1998.
- BR* = Szentkuthy, Miklós. *Barokk Róbert* [Robert Baroque]. Edited by Mária Tompa. Pécs: Jelenkor, 1991.
- ÉF* = Szentkuthy, Miklós. *Az élet faggatottja: Beszélgetések Szentkuthy Miklóssal* [The interrogatee of life: Conversations with Miklós Szentkuthy]. Edited by Márton Molnár. Budapest: Hamvas Intézet, 2006.
- EMF* = Szentkuthy, Miklós. *Az egyetlen metafora felé* [Towards the One and Only Metaphor]. 2<sup>nd</sup> rev. ed. Budapest: Szépirodalmi, 1985.
- FH* = Szentkuthy, Miklós. *Frivolitások és hitvallások* [Frivolities and confessions]. Edited by Mária Tompa. Budapest: Magvető, 1988.
- FSZ* = Szentkuthy, Miklós. *Fejezet a szerelemről* [Chapter on love]. 2<sup>nd</sup> rev. ed. Budapest: Szépirodalmi, 1984.
- FTJ* = Szentkuthy, Miklós. *Fájdalmak és titkok játéka: Naplójegyzetek és naplóillusztrációk 1925–1942* [The play of pains and secrets: Diary notes and diary illustrations 1925–1942]. Edited by Mária Tompa. Budapest: Magvető, 2001.
- MM* = Gyula Rugási, ed. *A mítosz mítosza: In memoriam Szentkuthy Miklós* [The myth of the myth: In memoriam Miklós Szentkuthy]. Budapest: Nap, 2001.
- PI* = Szentkuthy, Miklós. *Prae*. Vol. 1. 2<sup>nd</sup> rev. ed. Budapest: Magvető, 1980.
- PII* = Szentkuthy, Miklós. *Prae*. Vol. 2. 2<sup>nd</sup> rev. ed. Budapest: Magvető, 1980.
- SZOB I* = Szentkuthy, Miklós. *Szent Orpheus Breviáriuma* [Saint Orpheus breviary]. Vol. 1. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Budapest: Magvető, 1976.
- SZOB II* = Szentkuthy, Miklós. *Szent Orpheus Breviáriuma* [Saint Orpheus breviary]. Vol. 2. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Budapest: Magvető, 1976.
- SZOB III* = Szentkuthy, Miklós. *Szent Orpheus Breviáriuma* [Saint Orpheus breviary]. Vol. 3. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Budapest: Magvető, 1976.
- SZOB V* = Szentkuthy, Miklós. *Euridiké nyomában: Szent Orpheus Breviáriumának töredékben maradt V. kötete* [In search of Euridike: The fifth fragmentary volume of the Saint Orpheus Breviary]. Edited by Mária Tompa. Budapest: Magvető, 1993.
- VL* = Szentkuthy, Miklós. *Válogatott levelezése* [Selected correspondence]. Edited by Mária Tompa. Budapest: Hamvas Intézet, 2008.



## Notes

All titles of Szentkuthy's works are given in their English form.

By the end of 2013, two of Szentkuthy's books have appeared in English (*Marginalia on Casanova* and *Towards the One and Only Metaphor*).

Tim Wilkinson's English translation of the first volume of *Prae* is due to appear at the end of 2014 through Contra Mundum Press.

All translations of Szentkuthy's works are by the author of this thesis unless otherwise noted.

# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Background and Goals of the Thesis

Miklós Szentkuthy's (1908–1988) *Prae* (1934) is acknowledged as one of the most significant novels of Hungarian—if not European—literature of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Often compared to *In Search of Lost Time*, *Ulysses*, or *The Man Without Qualities*, *Prae* is a modernist novel that is comprised of over six hundred pages (or, in the second edition, over one thousand) filled with complex philosophical meditations and dazzling descriptions of the French Riviera landscapes. The book is an unquestionable masterpiece, and yet, until now, it has remained unknown to the wider public and it has enjoyed only very little scholarly interest. The reason for the novel's, so to say, unpopularity, is most probably its enormous difficulty—a difficulty that presents a challenge not only to average readers but also to academic scholars. A novel with almost no plot, *Prae* consists mostly of interior monologues, some of them so complex that reading and understanding a single page may easily take several hours. It is often impossible to know even what a given monologue is about, since Szentkuthy uses philosophical and scientific terms without defining them, and discusses topics and authors without explicitly identifying them. Moreover, Szentkuthy's associations and conclusions are often so hermetic and bizarre that it seems impossible to discern what he sought to convey with them. In effect, to read and to understand—let alone to analyze—*Prae* is a task that requires many years of work and which is not devoid of the risk of failure. As a result of all of these difficulties, 80 years after its first publication, *Prae*, one of the greatest achievements of Hungarian literature, still remains a *terra incognita*.

Those who want to study *Prae* find themselves in a problematic situation. A scholar interested in *Prae* has a dozen or so introductory studies at his disposal, but he has neither a scholarly edition nor a reading guide to consult. Since conducting research on a literary text presupposes that the scholar is familiar with the text he studies, the *sine qua non* of research on *Prae* should be to possess thorough knowledge of its content. However, to read and to fully understand the whole text of *Prae* with no exegetical study at hand is an enterprise that might take many years of hard work—and that would only be the preliminary research. It seems then that the most urgent task in *Prae* studies would be to make a systematic exegesis of the text, that is, to explain the content of the novel paragraph by paragraph. The exegesis of *Prae*—be it in the form of a scholarly edition or a reading guide—would save other researchers many years of struggle and it would pave the way for a more advanced and detailed exploration of Szentkuthy's novel. To put it very simply, if we want more research on *Prae* to be done, we first need to devote more effort to understand and to explain the difficult text of the novel. This conviction lies at the heart of my thesis (on my theoretical presuppositions concerning exegesis, see the final paragraphs in 1.4).

When I myself was struggling with Szentkuthy's novel and lamenting the lack of exegetical works on it, I visited the Petőfi Museum of Literature in Budapest (hereafter PIM). There, in the Szentkuthy Archive, I discovered documentary material that includes the

manuscript to *Prae*, drafts of *Prae*, diary notes, marginal notes in Szentkuthy's books, and letters and postcards. Although this material has been available to scholars, it has never been studied nor commented upon. My immediate thought was, therefore, that these documents need to be examined. When I started to examine the material, I noticed that some parts of the manuscript are dated on the versos. In the drafts—many of them also dated—I recognized themes that I had already known from the printed text. Moreover, I found numerous references to *Prae* in Szentkuthy's correspondence with his wife Dolly<sup>1</sup> and his lover Mária Hercz. I also noticed the specific structure of the manuscript, which includes numerous additions written on small pages and attached to the main text with paper clips. All of this led me to the belief that, with the help of the discovered material, it would be possible to reconstruct the chronology and other particularities of the genesis of *Prae*. I became interested in so-called genetic criticism and decided that I would, as far as this is possible, reconstruct in my dissertation the genesis of *Prae* on the basis of the documents found at PIM. The first research question of this dissertation is thus how—by what process and what writing operations—Szentkuthy wrote *Prae*.

When I began to reconstruct how Szentkuthy wrote *Prae* I noticed that, in light of my findings, some previous assumptions about *Prae* prove to be imprecise if not simply erroneous. I thought that, if other scholars had known what I now do, many misinterpretations could have been avoided. In this way, the second research question emerged: how does knowledge of *Prae*'s genesis challenge our previous conceptions of the work?

In the course of my research I did not forget my conviction about the urgency of exegesis. What is more, I realized that knowledge of *Prae*'s genesis helped me to better understand some of its more difficult parts. It occurred to me then that one of the aims of my thesis should also be to show how the results of genetic analysis can be used to explain the novel. Hence, the third research question: how can knowledge of *Prae*'s genesis be made useful when making an exegesis of it?

The aim of this thesis is thus threefold. Firstly, my main concern is to investigate the process of *Prae*'s genesis using the methodological tools of genetic criticism. Until now, the archival material from PIM has not been analyzed, and relatively little has been known of the years 1928–34, the period when Szentkuthy wrote *Prae*. My thesis fills this gap in knowledge by establishing his writing process chronology, and by distinguishing the principal techniques of his writing method. Additionally, the thesis presents new information about Szentkuthy's life during the years 1928–34. All of this makes my thesis an important contribution to Szentkuthy studies. Secondly, in the course of this genetic analysis, I wish to demonstrate how knowledge of *Prae*'s genesis challenges previous suppositions about the novel. Thirdly, keeping in mind the urgency of exegesis, my aim is to show how knowledge of the novel's genesis can be utilized in research focused on explaining *Prae*. I myself also try to explain, as comprehensively as possible, those parts of *Prae* that I analyze in this study, but, obviously, I cannot provide an exhaustive exegesis of the entire novel—this remains a task for future

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<sup>1</sup> Szentkuthy's wife's name was actually Dóra Eppinger, and later, after she married Szentkuthy, Dóra Pfisterer. However, in Szentkuthy scholarship, it has become customary to refer to Szentkuthy's wife by the nickname Dolly.

researchers and is beyond the scope of this thesis. My study is the first doctoral thesis on Szentkuthy's *Prae*, but hopefully it will not remain the only one. It is my wish that the analyses and results presented here will prove to be useful and open the way to future research on *Prae*.

## 1.2 Brief Characterization of *Prae*

Set in Cannes, *Prae* tells the story of Leatrice, a Russian-Jewish prostitute who has been working in a local nightclub called *Perspective* but who decides to move out and start a new, spiritual life. Other main characters include Leatrice's friend, Ena, a French philosopher and writer, Leville-Touqué, an Englishman, Halbert, and his father, an Exeterian parson. *Prae* consists of three parts, which in the second and third edition was divided into 14 chapters. In part 1 (chapters 1–8), Leatrice has an argument with Leville-Touqué and Halbert, after which she leaves *Perspective* and moves to a hotel where she rents a room with a sea view. In part 2 (chapters 9–13), Leatrice is contemplating the sea and reminiscing about her past. Part 3 (chapter 14) is Halbert's father's diary.

The plot of *Prae* is thus very simple; the novel's focus is, however, not on the plot but on the characters' retrospections, which are presented in the form of achronological free associations interwoven with the narrator's comments. The fact that the retrospections are mainly based on Szentkuthy's own experiences lends the novel a strongly confessional character. What the protagonists of *Prae* recall are mainly images (landscapes, people, dreams, objects) and emotions (love, desire, longing, despair) from their past, but the novel also engages in other topics as varied as art, modern architecture, 1930s women's fashion, Riviera life, theology, and novel writing. The images and emotions evoked in the characters' memories are subjected to complex analyses whose understanding requires multiple rereading. A typical analysis consists of the presentation of a conceptual construction followed by numerous visual analogies and similes (which are the main poetical devices employed by Szentkuthy).

*Prae* is written in a largely idiosyncratic language of exceptional beauty, which combines elements of philosophical reflection, scientific treatise, and poetic prose. Szentkuthy's language is thus both analytical and sensual. The reader can both follow the thread of the analyses, and at the same time feel the author's sensory experiences, his emotions, and the intensity of his thinking process, which are conveyed through the unusual form of the language (density and complexity of descriptions, rush of images and similes, opacity verging on incomprehensibility).

*Prae* has sometimes been compared to other modernist novels, such as *In Search of Lost Time*, *Ulysses*, and *The Man Without Qualities*. It has also been seen as a forerunner of the postmodern novel, yet, all in all, there is no general consensus as to its historical literary status. On the contrary, scholars like to point out *Prae*'s uniqueness: it has often been stated that Szentkuthy's novel breaks with all tradition and thus falls beyond literary schools and trends. It is true however that, at least from the perspective of narrative form, *Prae* can be

regarded as the epitome of the modernist novel. Amongst the numerous narrative innovations that Szentkuthy employs in *Prae*, we shall find decentralized structure (the novel includes long series of the characters' retrospections, whereas the unifying narrative is limited); montage (*Prae* contains narratively unrelated fragments juxtaposed without narratorial comments); and the merging of narrative voices (the characters' memories are intertwined with narratorial comments in a way that makes their voices indistinguishable).<sup>2</sup>

### 1.3 Previous Research and the Reception of *Prae*

Despite the richness of Szentkuthy's imagination, the complexity of his thought, and the number of his formal innovations, the reception of *Prae* has been relatively scarce. Following the first publication of *Prae* in 1934, only one monograph,<sup>3</sup> several studies, and a small number of short reviews have been published in the last 80 years. There has been no scholarly edition of the novel, there is no ongoing research on *Prae*, neither is the novel included in the Hungarian university curriculum. The situation is thus paradoxical: while many scholars and readers rank *Prae* among the greatest novels of the twentieth century, Szentkuthy's masterpiece remains largely unresearched.<sup>4</sup> Since no trends and no schools in Szentkuthy reception have developed, the following overview is less a synthesis than a simple enumeration of the most important studies.

The reception of *Prae* proceeded in two phases. In the first phase, the reception included a dozen or so brief reviews in the daily Hungarian press and journals, all of which appeared shortly after the publication of *Prae* in 1934. The reviewers of *Prae* were concerned mainly with the novel's unusual form. Over six hundred pages, scanty indentations, lack of narrative tension, and predominance of interior monologues are qualities now considered typical of a modernist novel, but in 1930s conservative Hungary, still ruled by Balzacian novelistic conventions, they were regarded simply as a lack of form. Thus, in the first phase, the critics negatively considered *Prae* to be "formless." However, what varied was how this formlessness was interpreted. Some critics, such as Zsolt Alszegehy<sup>5</sup> and Mihály Babits,<sup>6</sup> simply rejected *Prae* as "unreadable." Others, such as Miklós Kállay,<sup>7</sup> or Szentkuthy's friends Gábor Halász<sup>8</sup> and Antal Szerb,<sup>9</sup> frowned upon the novel's form but praised the author's

<sup>2</sup> Since the present thesis focuses mainly on the genesis of *Prae*, I am not concerned with analyzing the novel's narrative form in detail. For an exploration of that, see my article in *Hyperion*, where I discuss the decentralized structure of *Prae* and Szentkuthy's innovative technique of narrative voices: Filip Sikorski, "Introductory Remarks on Miklós Szentkuthy's *Prae*," *Hyperion: On the Future of Aesthetics* 7, no. 2 (18 July 2013): 72–92, accessed 25 October 2013, [http://www.contramundum.net/Hyperion/Documents/2.1--Sikorski--Intro\\_Prae.pdf](http://www.contramundum.net/Hyperion/Documents/2.1--Sikorski--Intro_Prae.pdf).

<sup>3</sup> Pál Nagy, *Az elérhetetlen szöveg: "Prae"-palimpszeszt* [The unachievable text: "Prae" palimpsest] (Budapest: Anonymus, 1999). Partially reprinted in *MM*, 339–57. Citations refer to the Anonymus edition.

<sup>4</sup> However, the situation might change with the publication of Tim Wilkinson's English translation of the novel's first volume at the end of 2014 through Contra Mundum Press.

<sup>5</sup> Zsolt Alszegehy (1888–1970). Literary critic.

<sup>6</sup> Mihály Babits (1883–1941). Acknowledged poet, writer, translator, influential literary critic. In the years 1929–1941, editor-in-chief of the literary journal *Nyugat*.

<sup>7</sup> Miklós Kállay (1885–1955). Writer, literary critic, translator.

<sup>8</sup> Gábor Halász (1901–1945). Influential literary critic, essayist.

talent and imagination. Only three critics, László Németh,<sup>10</sup> Béla Hamvas,<sup>11</sup> and Endre Vajda<sup>12</sup> considered the novel's formlessness to be one of its most interesting qualities.

Let us now examine the 1930s reviews in more detail. As mentioned above, the first reviewers of *Prae* can be divided into three groups. The first group includes critics who simply rejected Szentkuthy's novel as "unreadable." A typical example here may be Zsolt Alszeghy, who refers to *Prae* as a "monstrosity" that is "tedious, annoying, sometimes disgusting, other times incomprehensible."<sup>13</sup> *Prae* might be an interesting case for a psychiatrist, concludes Alszeghy, but it has nothing to do with literature.

Other reviews were written in a similar tone. It is unnecessary to quote all of them; however, as a prototypical example, even Mihály Babits, who was at the time an established poet, well-known intellectual, and editor-in-chief of the literary journal *Nyugat*,<sup>14</sup> spoke in a similar vein. Babits devoted two short essays to Szentkuthy's novel. The first essay appeared in the August 1934 issue of *Nyugat*. In it, Babits criticizes the excessive length of modern novels by playing on the double sense of the Hungarian adjective *nehéz*, which means both "difficult" and "heavy." Both classical and modern novels can be characterized as *nehéz*, says Babits, but while the classics are intellectually "difficult," the modern ones are "heavy" only physically. Thus, Babits concludes, despite being heavy, modern novels are in fact insignificant, and they will soon disappear "like rag-paper in water."<sup>15</sup> In the following issue of *Nyugat*, Babits offered a further critique. *Prae* might have all the appearance of a great novel, says Babits, but its "horrible baroque style" and "pretentious quasi-proustian sentences" "scare away" readers. *Prae* is therefore a "cheap masterpiece," concludes Babits; it might be a literary event, but it will be soon forgotten.<sup>16</sup> Perhaps Babits's negative attitude explains why, despite some attempts, Szentkuthy never managed to publish anything in *Nyugat*. After the publication of *Prae*, when Szentkuthy was working on *Narcissus's Mirror*

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<sup>9</sup> Antal Szerb (1901–1945). Acknowledged writer, scholar, influential literary critic. Author of *The Pendragon Legend* (2006) [*A Pendragon-legenda* (1934)] and *Journey by Moonlight* (2001) [*Útas és holdvilág* (1937)].

<sup>10</sup> László Németh (1901–1975). Acknowledged writer, dramatist, essayist.

<sup>11</sup> Béla Hamvas (1897–1968). Acknowledged writer, philosopher, translator. Author of *The Philosophy of Wine* (2003) [*A bor filozófiája* (1989)].

<sup>12</sup> Endre Vajda (1914–1987). Poet, literary critic, translator.

<sup>13</sup> "Szörnyeteg," "fárasztó, bosszantó, olykor undorító, máskor érthetetlen." Zsolt Alszeghy, review of *Prae*, by Miklós Szentkuthy, *Katolikus Szemle* 48, no. 8 (August 1934): 509.

<sup>14</sup> *Nyugat* (The West). One of the most influential Hungarian literary periodicals in the first half of 20<sup>th</sup> century, published from 1908 to 1941.

<sup>15</sup> "Mint rongypapír a vízben." Mihály Babits, "Könyvről könyvre" [From book to book], *Nyugat* 27, no. 14–15 (August 1934): 95. When speaking of modern novels, Babits does not mention any by name, but it is most probable that the works he refers to are Szentkuthy's *Prae* and Ferenc Körmendi's (1900–1972) 850 pages long novel *The Happy Generation* (1945) [*A boldog emberöltő* (1934)]. Both books appeared in the summer of 1934. In her diary, Dolly (Szentkuthy's wife) notes that Szentkuthy phoned her as soon as he read Babits's article. Having heard about the article, she became angry and bitter. Both Szentkuthy's phone call and Dolly's bitterness imply that they were convinced that the book discussed by Babits is *Prae* (Dolly's diary, 28 July 1934). Later, in a letter to Dolly, Szentkuthy reports that in Antal Szerb's opinion, Babits's article refers only to Körmendi (Szentkuthy to Dolly, 7 August 1934). The word "only," underlined by Szentkuthy, implies that Szentkuthy does not agree with Szerb and that in Szentkuthy's view Babits's essay must have referred both to Körmendi and *Prae*. This hypothesis is confirmed by the fact that, in the following issue of *Nyugat*, Babits continues the theme of "heavy" literature and explicitly quotes from *Prae*.

<sup>16</sup> "Rettenetes barokk stílus," "nyakatekert ál-prousti mondatok," "visszariasztani," "olcsó remek." Mihály Babits, "Könyvről könyvre," *Nyugat* 27, no. 16 (September 1934): 180–81. Reprinted in *MM*, 30–32.

(*Narcisszusztükre*), Szerb tried to help him to publish some parts of it in *Nyugat*.<sup>17</sup> The journal, however, never published any part of *Narcissus's Mirror*, perhaps because Babits refused to do so.

The position of the critics from the second group was ambivalent. They considered Szentkuthy a talented writer, who, however, failed to give his ideas a proper form. A good example of this ambivalence can be found in Miklós Kállay's articles. In his first review, which appeared in the Sunday issue of *Nemzeti újság* (National Paper) on 13 May 1934 (ten days after the publication of the novel), Kállay characterizes *Prae* as incomprehensible and unreadable.<sup>18</sup> However, in his second review, he admits that the novel also has its positive sides: it may be incomprehensible, but it does contain interesting poetic descriptions which speak to the reader's emotions—*Prae* remains a failure, but Szentkuthy has the potential to write better novels in the future.<sup>19</sup> Later, Kállay mentioned *Prae* one more time in an article concerning the characteristics of modernist literature.<sup>20</sup> Kállay lists the following features: domination of fantasy over realism; interest in psychology and the unconscious; employment of interior monologue; lack of composition; obscurity; and predilection for mysticism. As the main representatives of modern literature he mentions Dujazdin [*sic*], Proust, Joyce, Dos Panos [*sic*], Gide, and Claudel. At the end of his essay, Kállay contends that *Prae* is the only example of fully modernist prose in Hungary. The critic's opinion, however, remains ambivalent: he praises Szentkuthy's imagination, but he disapproves of *Prae*'s obscurity.

A friend of Szentkuthy's, Gábor Halász, also remained ambivalent about *Prae*: as enthusiastic as he was about the novel,<sup>21</sup> he was not content with its form. After five pages of a beautiful description, says Halász in his review in *Nyugat*, we have to read fifty pages of dull text; the novel is overwritten and lacks narrative tension, which makes us doubt whether Szentkuthy's destruction of novelistic form could bring "positive" effects.<sup>22</sup> In his review of Szentkuthy's next book, *Towards the One and Only Metaphor* (*Az egyetlen metafora felé*), Halász repeats the same reproach: the raw material is splendid, but Szentkuthy must learn to give it a form; only in this way, concludes Halász, can he succeed as a novelist.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Szentkuthy to Dolly, 7 August 1934; Dolly's diary, 5 November 1934.

<sup>18</sup> [Miklós Kállay?], review of *Prae*, by Miklós Szentkuthy, *Nemzeti Újság*, 13 May 1934. The article is signed "-s" but in *Frivolities and Confessions* Szentkuthy surmises that it was written by Kállay. *FH*, 346.

<sup>19</sup> Miklós Kállay "Körutazás könyvorszámban" [Round trip in the land of books], *Képes krónika* 16, no. 22 (27 May 1934): 25.

<sup>20</sup> Miklós Kállay "Ismeretlen hatodik érzék számára akart alkotni az irodalmi modernség" [Literary modernity wanted to create for the unknown sixth sense], *Korforduló* (supplement to *Nemzeti újság*), no. 129 (1934): 6–7.

<sup>21</sup> In a letter to Dolly, Szentkuthy writes that Halász considers *Prae* a very significant book (Szentkuthy to Dolly, 24 June 1934). Dolly confirms this in an entry in her diary (Dolly's diary, 16 October 1934). In another entry, she notes that Halász knows the content of *Prae* very well (Dolly's diary, 8 November 1934).

<sup>22</sup> Gábor Halász, "PRAE: Szentkuthy Miklós könyve" [PRAE: Miklós Szentkuthy's book], *Nyugat* 27, no. 17–18 (September 1934): 275–78. Reprinted in *MM*, 23–27.

<sup>23</sup> Gábor Halász, "Szentkuthy Miklós: Az egyetlen metafora felé" [Miklós Szentkuthy: Towards the One and Only Metaphor], in *MM*, 36–37.

Of all the critics from the second group, Antal Szerb's review in the journal *Erdélyi Helikon* (Transylvanian Helicon) is the most favorable.<sup>24</sup> Szerb's praise of Szentkuthy's intelligence has already become famous, hence it is worth quoting in full:

There has not yet been a Hungarian book as intelligent as *Prae*. It skips lightly, playfully, ironically and in incomparably individual fashion around the highest intellectual peaks of the European mind. It will become one of the great documents of Hungarian culture that this book was written in Hungarian.<sup>25</sup>

Yet, as for Kállay and Halász, lack of form remains a problem for Szerb. Artistic form, says Szerb, enables the writer to convey his thoughts to the reader: without such form, *Prae* remains a great but "unreadable" work. Although Szerb does not clearly condemn *Prae*'s "unreadability" we know that he did condemn it in private conversations with Szentkuthy.<sup>26</sup>

The third group includes critics for whom it was precisely the form of *Prae* that made the novel interesting. Here, we should first mention László Németh, who was one of the most enthusiastic readers of *Prae*. His first, short but very positive review appeared in his journal *Tanú* (Witness) in June of 1933, when the novel was still a work in progress.<sup>27</sup> Németh's second review did not appear until after the publication of Szentkuthy's second book, *Towards the One and Only Metaphor*, but the review also deals with *Prae*.<sup>28</sup> According to Németh, it is precisely the experimentation with form wherein the essence of Szentkuthy's writing lies. Pointing out the inchoate character of the monologues in *Prae*, Németh compares Szentkuthy's book to an open atelier: what the reader can see is not the novel, but the process of its genesis. What is interesting in *Prae*, claims Németh, is that, in its long monologues, we can follow the operations of the artist's mind. "Good material, but poor form; highly intelligent, but totally formless—those are the sort of objections that were raised against Szentkuthy," says Németh and continues, "I can't say I fully understand such objections in the case of a work that is not struggling with its own form, but with form itself."<sup>29</sup> Thus, it is neither Joyce, nor Proust, but Kant who Szentkuthy should be put parallel to, concludes Németh, as both Kant's and Szentkuthy's aims were to observe and analyze the work of the human mind.

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<sup>24</sup> Antal Szerb, "Szentkuthy Miklós: *Prae*," *Erdélyi Helikon* 7, no. 7 (August–September 1934): 547–49. Reprinted in *MM*, 20–23. Translated by Tim Wilkinson as "Miklós Szentkuthy: *Prae*," *Hyperion: On the Future of Aesthetics* 7, no. 2 (18 July 2013): 93–96, accessed 25 October 2013, [http://www.contramundum.net/Hyperion/Documents/2.2--Szerb--Prae\\_Review.pdf](http://www.contramundum.net/Hyperion/Documents/2.2--Szerb--Prae_Review.pdf).

<sup>25</sup> Szerb, "Miklós Szentkuthy: *Prae*," 96. "Nincs még egy ilyen intelligens könyvünk, mint a *Prae*. Az európai szellem legmagasabb gondolatcsúcsait járja be könnyedén, játékosan, ironikusan és hasonlíthatatlanul egyéni módon. Magyar kultúránk egyik nagy dokumentuma lesz, hogy ezt a könyvet magyarul írták." *MM*, 22.

<sup>26</sup> In the summer of 1934, Szerb and Szentkuthy often met and Szentkuthy reported on those meetings to Dolly. We know from Szentkuthy's letters that Szerb tried to persuade him to write a novel in a traditional form (Szentkuthy to Dolly, 24 June 1934), and that he considered Szentkuthy's formless writing a waste of talent (Szentkuthy to Dolly, 18 August 1934). Dolly also notes in her diary that Szerb has been asking her to talk Szentkuthy into introducing more plot into his novels (Dolly's diary, 5 November 1934).

<sup>27</sup> László Németh, "A hét napjai: Magyar kaleidoszkop" [Weekdays: Hungarian kaleidoscope], *Tanú*, no. 5 (June 1933): 294–303. Reprinted in *MM*, 18–20.

<sup>28</sup> László Németh, "*Az egyetlen metafora felé*" [Towards the One and Only Metaphor], in *MM*, 40–45.

<sup>29</sup> Trans. Tim Wilkinson (unpublished). "Jó anyag, de rossz forma; nagy intellektus, de teljesen alakatlan," "Nem egészen értem ezeket a kifogásokat egy műnél, mely nem a saját formájával, hanem a formával vívódik." *Ibid.*, 44.



In his review in the journal *Napkelet* (The Orient), Béla Hamvas seems to reach similar conclusions.<sup>30</sup> Hamvas considers *Prae* a description of the thinking processes of a human mind, but, he adds, it is important to remember that the work of the human mind is by nature chaotic and disorganized. *Prae* is thus a perfect illustration of the “anarchy of a mind,” concludes Hamvas, and with this claim he appears to justify *Prae*’s formlessness.

Finally, we should briefly mention Endre Vajda’s article, “Az intellektuális író” (The intellectual writer), which appeared in 1939, and which analyzes three works by Szentkuthy: *Prae*, *Towards the One and Only Metaphor*, and *Chapter on Love* (*Fejezet a szerelemről*).<sup>31</sup> According to Vajda, the essential feature of Szentkuthy’s artistic project is its continuous search of a form. *Prae* might not be a completed novel, claims Vajda, but this does not diminish its artistic value.

The war and the years that followed marked a long period of silence. The second phase of the reception of *Prae* started at the beginning of the 1970s, and it has continued to this day. *Prae* was reissued in 1980 and then in 2004, which gave rise to a number of review essays. The second phase also saw the awakening of academic interest in *Prae*. The leitmotifs of the second phase of criticism are the following. Firstly, the form of *Prae* has not been seen as a drawback but as a positive and interesting factor. Secondly, more emphasis has been put on defining the place of *Prae* in European literary history. Thus, for instance, Imre Bori associates Szentkuthy’s novel with surrealism, Gyula Sipos and Pál Nagy hail *Prae* as a masterpiece of modernism and forerunner of the *nouveau roman*, Tibor Hanák is interested in the philosophical sources of *Prae*, and Imre Bata links the novel to existentialism. Thirdly, there has been much interest in the way the text of *Prae* conveys the processes of the author’s consciousness. Scholars such as Pál Nagy, Miklós Béládi, József J. Fekete, and Gyula Rugási have observed that the monologues in *Prae* are an illustration of Szentkuthy’s cognitive processes.

Let us now look into the second phase of criticism in more detail. The first full-length academic article on Szentkuthy was written by the Yugoslavian Hungarian scholar Imre Bori and published in the journal *Híd* under the title “Szentkuthy Miklós.”<sup>32</sup> The aim of Bori’s study (whose first part is devoted to *Prae*) is to discuss the connections of Szentkuthy’s oeuvre to surrealism (mainly Aragon and Breton). In his search for surrealist elements in *Prae*, Bori manages to find three aspects. Firstly, he refers to the famous opening lines of *Prae* where Leville-Touqué observes “the point before which there was not yet a logical or artistic inspiration to write a new system or a new novel, but at which point the first germs of inspiration were already present.”<sup>33</sup> The interest in the state of mind preceding the advent of thought, argues Bori, is common both to Szentkuthy and the surrealists. Secondly, Bori

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<sup>30</sup> Béla Hamvas, “Szentkuthy Miklós: *Prae*,” *Napkelet* 13, no. 2 (February 1935): 123–25. Reprinted in *MM*, 32–35.

<sup>31</sup> Endre Vajda, “Az intellektuális író,” *Protestáns Szemle*, no. 2 (1939): 255–60. Reprinted in *MM*, 51–57.

<sup>32</sup> Imre Bori, “Szentkuthy Miklós,” *Híd*, no. 10–11 (1970): 1041–67. Reprinted in Imre Bori, *Huszonöt tanulmánya a XX. századi magyar irodalomról* [Twenty-five studies on 20<sup>th</sup>-century Hungarian literature] (Novi Sad: Forum, 1984), 180–202. Partially reprinted in *MM*, 113–33.

<sup>33</sup> “Azt a pontot figyelteti meg, mely pont előtt még nem volt semmi logikai vagy művészeti ihlete egy új rendszer vagy regény megírásához, de amely ponton már jelentkezik az ihlet első csírája.” *P I*, 8. Trans. Tim Wilkinson (unpublished).

observes that *Prae* not only theorizes the birth of thought but also shows it in practice by a number of associations, wordplay, memories, and dream-like and hallucinatory images. Finally, pointing out Szentkuthy's penchant for surprising associations, Bori notices that, similarly to the surrealists, Szentkuthy sees beauty in the accidental encounter of unrelated things.

The next chapter in Szentkuthy's reception opens with the publication of a special issue of the journal *Magyar Műhely* (Hungarian Atelier), whose editors-in-chief were Hungarian émigrés in France, Pál Nagy and Tibor Papp. In 1974, on the occasion of the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the publication of *Prae*, a special Szentkuthy issue of *Magyar Műhely* came out.<sup>34</sup> The Szentkuthy issue was accompanied by a supplement, *D'atelier*, in which Nagy and Papp, together with Philippe Dôme, translated the first chapter of *Prae* into French.<sup>35</sup>

The central article in *Magyar Műhely*, and at the same time one of the most astute analyses of *Prae*, is by philosopher Tibor Hanák, who attempts to identify the philosophical sources of the novel.<sup>36</sup> Hanák situates Szentkuthy's novel in the context of irrationalist tendencies in Occidental philosophy. Following the philosophies of Heidegger, Bergson, and Nietzsche, *Prae* questions the power of reason and explores the realm of feeling, intuition, or madness. What Hanák also notices is that one of the central problems of *Prae* is that of description: Szentkuthy struggles to describe a chaotic, incomprehensible world, but he fails, and *Prae* is a testimony to his failure.

Contributions to *Magyar Műhely* include two other articles on *Prae*. György Kassai emphasizes Szentkuthy's linguistic sensibility and discusses two stylistic features of *Prae*: tautology and wordplay (*szójáték*), which is Szentkuthy's term for portmanteau words.<sup>37</sup> Éva November reads *Prae* in light of what she calls structuralism and semiology, but what we would today call poststructuralism.<sup>38</sup> Drawing mostly on Kristeva's early articles, November presents *Prae* as a revolutionary work that falls beyond categories and which provokes a dialogue with the reader.

Further significant French critical assessments of Szentkuthy include that of Gyula Sipos, who translated the table of contents of *Prae* into French, and published it in 1977 in the journal *Nouveau Commerce*.<sup>39</sup> Sipos preceded the translation with a very informative article, "Prae: Dissémination et Montage du roman," where he presents the general characteristics of the novel.<sup>40</sup> Sipos situates *Prae* in the context of modernism, but he notes that it also has traits

<sup>34</sup> *Magyar Műhely* 12, no. 45–46 (1974).

<sup>35</sup> Miklós Szentkuthy, "Prae," trans. Pál Nagy, Tibor Papp, and Philippe Dôme, *D'atelier*, no. 6–7 (Printemps/Été 1974): 7–58. Reprinted in *Hyperion: On the Future of Aesthetics* 7, no. 2 (18 July 2013): 116–58, accessed 25 October 2013, [http://www.contramundum.net/Hyperion/Documents/2.4-SzM\\_Prae-1-Fr.pdf](http://www.contramundum.net/Hyperion/Documents/2.4-SzM_Prae-1-Fr.pdf).

<sup>36</sup> Tibor Hanák, "Praefilozófia" [Praephilosophy], *Magyar Műhely* 12, no. 45–46 (1974): 18–39. Partially reprinted in *MM*, 150–61.

<sup>37</sup> György Kassai, "Tautológia és szójáték Szentkuthy Prae-jében" [Tautology and wordplay in Szentkuthy's "Prae"], *Magyar Műhely* 12, no. 45–46 (1974): 40–54. Reprinted in *MM*, 134–50.

<sup>38</sup> Éva November, "Szentkuthy – Az első magyar strukturalista: A Prae ürügyén" [Szentkuthy – the first Hungarian structuralist: in connection with "Prae"], *Magyar Műhely* 12, no. 45–46 (1974): 55–64.

<sup>39</sup> Miklós Szentkuthy, "Prae: Table (1934)," trans. Gyula Sipos, *Le Nouveau Commerce*, no. 38 (Automne 1977): 133–59. Reprinted in *Hyperion: On the Future of Aesthetics* 7, no. 2 (18 July 2013): 97–115, accessed 25 October 2013, [http://www.contramundum.net/Hyperion/Documents/2.3-SzM-Prae\\_ToC.pdf](http://www.contramundum.net/Hyperion/Documents/2.3-SzM-Prae_ToC.pdf).

<sup>40</sup> Gyula Sipos, "Prae: Dissémination et Montage du roman," *Le Nouveau Commerce*, no. 38 (Automne 1977): 121–31.

similar to those used in Baroque novels. Additionally, he points out Szentkuthy's antihumanism and antipsychologism, the writer's inclination to juxtapose high and low culture, and—what has escaped most commentators—the fact that one of the central themes of *Prae* is love.

1980 saw the publication of the second edition of *Prae*, which gave further momentum to the novel's reception. The reviews were very favorable this time.<sup>41</sup> Apart from them, some scholarly articles were also published, among which, two longer studies should be mentioned. The author of the first article, Imre Bata, reads *Prae*—an “ontological novel,” as he names it—in light of Heidegger's philosophy.<sup>42</sup> Bata also points out that *Prae* reveals to the reader Szentkuthy's mental processes. The second article, “A *Prae*, vagy regény a regényről” (“*Prae*,” or a novel about a novel), was written by Miklós Béládi, who, like Bata, argues that *Prae* shows how a human mind understands the world.<sup>43</sup> Apart from that, Béládi polemizes with Bori and claims that *Prae* is an anti-surrealist novel since Szentkuthy's goal is to overcome chaos and to find order in the world. In 2004, the third edition of *Prae* appeared. The reception of the third edition was warm but not as vivid as in 1980.<sup>44</sup>

In recent years, three authors have written more extensively on *Prae*. Starting from 1986, József J. Fekete published three short collections of essays on Szentkuthy.<sup>45</sup> In 2005, he summarized them in a book entitled *Post*, which includes one chapter devoted to *Prae*.<sup>46</sup> Arguing that, for Szentkuthy, the process of thinking is more important than a well-defined thought, Fekete considers *Prae* a record of stream of consciousness in which the rational merges with the sensual. Additionally, Fekete gives a brief introduction of the novel as well as a very informative overview of its main characteristics, themes, and sources.

<sup>41</sup> The following list includes some of the most important reviews: Tamás Bárány, “Szentkuthy Miklós: PRAE? POST!,” *Új tükör*, 18 October 1981; Imre Bori, “Egy regény másodszor is a magyar irodalomban” [A novel for the second time in Hungarian literature], *7 nap*, 12 September 1980; András Lukácsy, “Szentkuthy Miklós regénymonstruma: Újraolvastuk a Praet” [Miklós Szentkuthy's novel monster: we have reread “Prae”], *Magyar Hírlap*, 14 December 1980; László Rónay, “A *Prae* ‘post’ nézetből” [“Prae” from the “post” perspective], *Vigília* 46, no. 1 (January 1981): 57–59; Csaba Sik, “Egy nagy mű köszöntése” [Salutation to a great work], *Könyvvilág*, 19 June 1980; György Somlyó, “Prae vagy Post?” [Prae or Post?], *Élet és irodalom*, 13 September 1980, reprinted in *Megíratlan könyvek* [Unwritten books] (Budapest: Szépirodalmi, 1982), 405–12; Dezső Tandori, “PRAE: Szentkuthy Miklós regénye” [PRAE: Miklós Szentkuthy's novel], *Magyar Nemzet*, 28 September 1980. See also a review in English: Ferenc Takács, “A Comedy of Ideas. Miklós Szentkuthy: Prae,” *Hungarian Literature Online*, accessed 25 October 2013, [http://hlo.hu/news/miklos\\_szentkuthy\\_prae](http://hlo.hu/news/miklos_szentkuthy_prae).

<sup>42</sup> Imre Bata, “A regény regénye, a Prae” [The novel of the novel: *Prae*], *Új Írás* 20, no. 11 (November 1980): 3–19. Partially reprinted in *MM*, 339–57.

<sup>43</sup> Miklós Béládi, “A *Prae*, vagy regény a regényről,” *Jelenkor* (November 1981): 996–1002. Reprinted in *Válaszutat: Tanulmányok* [Crossroads: Studies] (Budapest: Szépirodalmi, 1983), 215–29.

<sup>44</sup> Let me mention only some reviews: András Nagy, “Semmiiből semmibe” [From nothing to nothing], *Élet és irodalom*, 4 March 2005; Dezső Tóth, “Könyv: Magányos tény (Szentkuthy Miklós: *Prae*)” [Book: a lonely fact (Miklós Szentkuthy: “Prae”), *Magyar Narancs*, 3 February 2005.

<sup>45</sup> József J. Fekete, *Olvasat* [Reading] (Novi Sad: Forum, 1986); József J. Fekete, *Olvasat II: Újabb esszék Szentkuthyról* [Reading II: New essays on Szentkuthy] (Sombor: Informativni centar, 1993); József J. Fekete, *Széljegyzetek Szentkuthyhoz: Körbejárt, egyre kitaposottabb utakon Szentkuthy Miklós regényeiben* [Marginalia on Szentkuthy: On the more and more beaten tracks in Miklós Szentkuthy's novels] (Novi Sad: Jugoszláviai Magyar Művelődési Társaság, 1998). Fekete's most recent book on Szentkuthy appeared in 2010 but it does not include studies on *Prae*: József J. Fekete, *Elmélet helyett: koreográfia; Újabb Szentkuthy-olvasatok* [Instead of theory: choreography; New Szentkuthy readings] (Budapest: Cédrus Művészeti Alapítvány – Napkút, 2010).

<sup>46</sup> József J. Fekete, “*Prae*,” in *Post: Szentkuthy Miklós és művei* [Post: Miklós Szentkuthy and his works] (Novi Sad: Forum, 2005), 89–122.

In 1999, Pál Nagy, the editor-in-chief of *Magyar Műhely* and one of the French translators of *Prae*, published a monograph entitled *Az elérhetetlen szöveg* (The unachievable text) in which he compares *Prae*, *In Search of Lost Time*, and *Finnegans Wake*.<sup>47</sup> According to Nagy, the authors' similarity lies in their desire to express the totality of the world in an innovative and experimental artistic form. What Nagy also discusses are Szentkuthy's poetic devices: wordplay, metaphor, hyperbole, tautology, and description. Finally, one of Nagy's observations is that many of Szentkuthy's narrative innovations were later rediscovered by the authors of the *nouveau roman*.

Last but not least, we should mention Gyula Rugási, who has written widely on *Prae*, although he considers the *St. Orpheus Breviary* (*Szent Orpheus Breviáriuma*) to be more interesting.<sup>48</sup> According to Rugási, *Prae* is an attempt to find the one and only physical and metaphysical principle that would account for all of the phenomena of the world. Rugási points out that Szentkuthy fails to execute his project: what remains at the end is only a chaos of thoughts and perceptions. What is interesting in Rugási's approach is his pessimism in regards to possibility of analysing *Prae*. The critic warns us that taking Szentkuthy's meditations seriously and trying to decipher their meaning may lead the scholar to a dead end. Rugási also takes notice of Szentkuthy's usage of ekphrasis, which has escaped most of the commentators of *Prae*.

Besides Fekete, Nagy, and Rugási, chapters on Szentkuthy in books that concern the history of Hungarian literature in general should be mentioned. Recently, there has been a significant change in the way literary historians speak of *Prae*. Still in 1966, *A magyar irodalom története* (History of Hungarian literature), edited by István Sötér, presents *Prae* in a very condescending tone.<sup>49</sup> The two and a half pages long article repeats the 1930s criticism by claiming that *Prae* is "rather a psychological case than a literary work."<sup>50</sup>

Nowadays, however, Hungarian histories of literature speak of *Prae* in a more favorable tone. To give one example, consider Rugási's article, "Leatrice görög arca" (see the summary of Rugási's approach above), which was published in 2007 as part of a three-volumed *A magyar irodalom története* (Histories of Hungarian literature) edited by Mihály Szegedy-Maszák and András Veres.

Also in 2007, Tibor Gintli and Gábor Schein published the second volume of *Az irodalom rövid története* (A short history of literature), which included a chapter about *Prae*.<sup>51</sup> Gintli

<sup>47</sup> Nagy, *Az elérhetetlen szöveg*.

<sup>48</sup> Gyula Rugási, "Kísérleti regény" [Experimental novel], in *Szent Orpheus arcképe* [The portrait of Saint Orpheus] (Budapest: Pesti Szalon, 1992), 7–18; Gyula Rugási, "Kant és az egér: Az 'új epika' körvonalai Szentkuthy fiataalkori műveiben" [Kant and the mouse: The outlines of the "new prose" in Szentkuthy's early works], *Orpheus* 5, no. 1 (1994): 65–90; Gyula Rugási, "Leatrice görög arca – Szentkuthy Miklós: *Prae*" [The Greek face of Leatrice – Miklós Szentkuthy: *Prae*], in *A magyar irodalom története* [Histories of Hungarian literature], vol. 3, *1920-tól napjainkig* [From 1920 to the present day], ed. Mihály Szegedy-Maszák and András Veres (Budapest: Gondolat, 2007), 310–22. Available online through Miklós Szentkuthy's official website, accessed 25 October 2013, [http://www.szentkuthymiklos.hu/hu\\_CC-03.RugasiGy.Prae.html](http://www.szentkuthymiklos.hu/hu_CC-03.RugasiGy.Prae.html).

<sup>49</sup> "Szentkuthy Miklós," in *A magyar irodalom története*, vol. 6, *1919-től napjainkig* [From 1919 to the Present Day], ed. István Sötér (Budapest: Akadémiai, 1966), 748–50.

<sup>50</sup> "Inkább pszichológiai eset, mintsem irodalmi alkotás." Ibid., 749.

<sup>51</sup> Tibor Gintli and Gábor Schein, "Szentkuthy Miklós," in *Az irodalom rövid története* [A Short History of Literature], vol. 2, *A realizmustól máig* [From realism to the present day] (Pécs: Jelenkor, 2007), 318–323. See also *ibid.*, 535–36.

and Schein contend that *Prae*'s reception has been and still is very difficult, and point out that *Prae*'s uniqueness makes it difficult to contextualize the novel both in Hungarian and European histories of literature. They emphasize the self-contradictory character of the monologues in *Prae*, and observe that Szentkuthy prefers exercising the faculty of thinking to formulating clear and well-argued theses. One of Gintli's and Schein's important observations is that, in *Prae*, Szentkuthy fails to fully describe the world, but he does succeed in conveying this experience of failure to the reader. In effect, the reader of *Prae* is able to experience Szentkuthy's unsuccessful struggle to express himself: impossibility of description can thus be considered a positive feature of Szentkuthy's poetics.

More recently, in 2010, Lajos Grendel published *A modern magyar irodalom története* (History of modern Hungarian literature), which also contains a separate chapter on *Prae*.<sup>52</sup> Similarly to Gintli and Schein, Grendel indicates that *Prae*'s reception has been slow and that the novel still has not gained full recognition. He also briefly comments on *Prae*'s characteristics: lack of narrativity, fragmentariness, and linguistic creativity.

Also in 2010, a large volume of *Magyar Irodalom* (Hungarian literature) was published. The book includes a chapter on Szentkuthy, much of which is devoted to *Prae*.<sup>53</sup> The chapter—one of the best introductions to Szentkuthy's novel—was written by Tibor Gintli, who was also the book's editor. Gintli observes that Szentkuthy's ideas in *Prae* are highly self-contradictory, which he considers a positive element of Szentkuthy's poetics. He then goes on to discuss writers and traditions that influenced *Prae*. According to Gintli, the analyses and retrospections of *Prae* might have been influenced by *In Search of Lost Time*. However, he also notes that Szentkuthy's interests (for instance, negation of ego, or questions concerning the possibility of description) differ from those of Proust. Besides Proust, Gintli sees the sources of *Prae* in the movements of Cubism, Surrealism, and Dadaism. What Gintli also examines is the genre of the novel. On the one hand, he situates *Prae* at the border of literature and philosophy; on the other hand, pointing out the fact that all of the protagonists of *Prae* seem to speak with the author's voice, he observes that the novel shows a strong diary quality.

Apart from the works by Nagy, Fekete, Rugási, chapters in literary history books, and my articles (see bibliography), in recent years, *Prae* has not been studied. A rare exception here is Katalin Fleisz's 2012 article about the role of architecture, space, and city in Szentkuthy's works.<sup>54</sup> A significant part of the article is devoted to *Prae*.

To conclude, research on *Prae* still seems to be in a preliminary phase. Although it has achieved the status of a classic and it became, as Rugási puts it, "an inescapable paradigm in Hungarian literature,"<sup>55</sup> the book still remains a *terra incognita*. Scholars have concentrated

<sup>52</sup> Lajos Grendel, "Szentkuthy Miklós (1908–1988)," in *A modern magyar irodalom története: Magyar líra és epika a 20. században* [History of modern Hungarian literature: Hungarian poetry and prose in the 20<sup>th</sup> century] (Bratislava: Kalligram, 2010), 313–320.

<sup>53</sup> Tibor Gintli, "Szentkuthy Miklós," in *Magyar Irodalom*, ed. Tibor Gintli (Budapest: Akadémiai, 2010), 755–62.

<sup>54</sup> Katalin Fleisz, "Tér és közvetítettség: Építészet és várostematika Szentkuthy Miklós szövegeiben" [Space and mediation: Architecture and city thematics in Miklós Szentkuthy's texts], *Irodalomtörténet* 93, no. 4 (2012): 521–34.

<sup>55</sup> "Kikerülhetetlen paradigma a magyar irodalomban." Rugási, *Szent Orpheus arképe*, 10.

mainly on introducing the novel, describing its general characteristics, and reflecting on its place in the history of Hungarian and European literature. The existing studies on *Prae* are informative and useful introductions, but they are also very general. What still remains to be done, and what certainly will require many years of collective effort, is systematic exegesis of the text (explanation of the text paragraph by paragraph, thorough reconstruction of Szentkuthy's philosophy, and a detailed study of his sources), and analysis of its formal features, such as style and narrative structures. The present thesis contributes to this demanding task by investigating particularities of *Prae*'s genesis and by showing how this new information can be used in future research on *Prae*.

One of the merits of an exemplary doctoral thesis is that it enters into a dialogue with existing research. However, being the first doctoral dissertation devoted to *Prae*, the present thesis is by nature more of an isolated project than dialoguing with existing research. This is especially due to two reasons. Firstly, concentrating on the general characterization of *Prae*, previous research—much as it has been helpful in my work—has not addressed the questions of genetic criticism. Also, the material presented and analyzed in this thesis has not been known. In other words, many of the questions discussed in this thesis have never been dealt with before. Secondly, many fragments of *Prae* that this thesis analyzes (such as *Development of pain* in 5.2) have never been discussed before, or they have only been mentioned cursorily. As a result, I refer to other scholars only very rarely, although I do quote other critics insofar as their claims are in contradiction to the result of my analyses. It is often said that the task of genetic criticism is to enrich the existing knowledge of a literary work and to deepen its interpretation. In the present case, however, less than completing previous research, genetic analysis opens a new pathway and shows possibilities for future research on *Prae*.

## 1.4 Methods and Theoretical Presuppositions

This study is based on the concepts and methodological tools of genetic criticism.<sup>56</sup> Genetic criticism is a branch of literary criticism that investigates the way literary works are written. Genetic analysis involves the investigation of archival documents: manuscripts, sketches, notes, and all other material traces of an author's work. The analysis usually proceeds in three steps. The first step consists in the construction of a genetic dossier, that is, a collection of the documents that will subsequently be examined. The second step involves a reconstruction of the writing process, that is, establishing its chronology and specifying particularities of the author's writing method (I refer to these particularities as "writing operations," or "writing techniques"). In the third step, conclusions are devised and the results of the analysis are examined from the perspective of other approaches, such as intertextuality, poetics, thematics,

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<sup>56</sup> For a short presentation of the method see: Pierre-Marc de Biasi, "Critique génétique" in *Encyclopaedia universalis*, ed. Giuseppe Annoscia, vol. 6, *Colbertisme-Déchristianisation* (Paris: Encyclopaedia universalis, 2002), 772–780; Pierre-Marc de Biasi, "La critique génétique," in *Introduction aux Méthodes Critiques pour l'analyse littéraire*, ed. Daniel Bergez (Paris: Bordas, 1990), 5–40; Jean-Yves Tadié, "La critique génétique," in *La critique littéraire au XXe siècle* (Paris: Belfond, 1987), 275–293.

psychoanalysis, or—as in the case of the present thesis—exegesis. The structure of this thesis reflects the three steps of genetic analysis. Chapter 2 presents and describes the genetic dossier of *Prae*. Chapter 3 presents a chronology and a general overview of the writing process, whereas chapters 4, 5, and 6 analyze three basic techniques in Szentkuthy's writing. Finally, chapter 7 (conclusions) shows how the results of the thesis can be utilized in an exegesis of *Prae*.

Interest in the alchemy of literary creation is not necessarily a new phenomenon. For the last two hundred years, both writers and literary scholars have been asking questions about how a literary work comes into being. Without delving too deeply into the history of this inquiry, let us highlight a few notable examples, such as Poe's "The Philosophy of Composition," André Gide's novel *The Counterfeiters* (completed with the writing journal *Journal des Faux-Monnayeurs*), or even *Prae* itself, where Szentkuthy discusses both his own writing process and the general problems of novel writing (see 4.3.3).<sup>57</sup>

As for literary scholarship, the first genetic analyses *avant la lettre* date back to the beginning of the twentieth century. Already in 1903, Antoine Albalat published a study on the techniques of corrections, in which he analyzed the manuscripts of Flaubert, Pascal, and Rousseau, amongst other writers.<sup>58</sup> In 1908, Gustave Lanson published an essay in which he analyzed the genesis of the novel *Paul et Virginie* on the basis of Jacques-Henri Bernardin de Saint-Pierre's manuscripts.<sup>59</sup> In the 1920s, two scholars (independently of each other), Gustave Rudler and Pierre Audiat, attempted to develop a systematic methodology of genetic analysis.<sup>60</sup> In the 1950s and 60s, the number of genetically informed studies increased; some of the principal texts include Marie-Jeanne Durry's *Flaubert et ses projets inédits* and Claudine Gothot-Mersch's *La genèse de Madame Bovary*.<sup>61</sup>

Even though the interest in the process of literary creation has a long history, it is only in the early 1970s that the scholarly discipline of genetic criticism was established. The history of genetic criticism began in 1966 when the French Bibliothèque Nationale acquired the manuscripts of Heinrich Heine. In 1968, a research group under the supervision of Louis Hay was established to study the acquired manuscripts. The group was soon joined by Proust and Zola scholars. In 1974, the *Centre d'analyse des manuscrits* (CAM) at CNRS was established. The year 1979 saw the publication of a collection of essays entitled *Essais de critique génétique*, where the term *critique génétique* was first used.<sup>62</sup> In 1982, CAM changed its

<sup>57</sup> Edgar Allan Poe, "The Philosophy of Composition," in *The Fall of the House of Usher and Other Writings: Poems, Tales, Essays and Reviews*, ed. David Galloway (London: Penguin, 1986), 480–92; André Gide, *The Counterfeiters*, trans. Dorothy Bussy (London: Penguin, 1975); André Gide, *Journal des faux-monnayeurs* (Paris: Gallimard, 1929).

<sup>58</sup> Antoine Albalat, *Le Travail du Style enseigné par les corrections manuscrites des grands écrivains* (Paris: Colin, 1927). First published in 1903 by Colin.

<sup>59</sup> Gustave Lanson, "Un manuscrit de Paul et Virginie" in *Études d'histoire littéraire* (Paris: Champion, 1929), 224–58.

<sup>60</sup> Gustave Rudler, "Critique de genèse," chap. 7 in *Les techniques de la critique et de l'histoire littéraires* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1923), 140–58; Pierre Audiat, *La biographie de l'oeuvre littéraire: Esquisse d'une méthode critique* (Paris: Champion, 1924).

<sup>61</sup> Marie-Jeanne Durry, *Flaubert et ses projets inédits* (Paris: Nizet, 1950); Claudine Gothot-Mersch, *La genèse de Madame Bovary* (Paris: Corti, 1966).

<sup>62</sup> Louis Hay, ed., *Essais de critique génétique* (Paris: Flammarion, 1979).

name into *Institut des textes et manuscrits modernes* (ITEM). Now, in 2013, ITEM includes more than one hundred researchers from different countries.<sup>63</sup>

Regardless of the long history of the inquiry into the secrets of literary creation, the genetic critics—the so-called “geneticists”—like to point out the distinction which separates genetic criticism (*critique génétique*) from the pre-1970 approaches, which Pierre-Marc de Biasi refers to as “genesis studies” (*études de genèse*).<sup>64</sup> The theoretical debate concerning the scientific premises of genetic criticism has raised the following differences:

1. In contrast to genesis studies, which were for the most part individual and isolated projects, genetic criticism is an enterprise of a community of researchers, who, thanks to unified concepts and common analytical tools, can engage in a dialogue and compare their research results.

2. Unlike genesis studies, which were often based on suppositions, speculations, and anecdotes, genetic criticism—inspired by structuralist rigor—has an ambition to be a scientific investigation based on empirical evidence.

3. While the investigated material of genesis studies tended to be selective, the ambition of genetic criticism is to be as systematic and as exhaustive as possible.

4. The earlier critics were inclined to look at the genesis of a work from the perspective of its final version. The geneticists oppose this view: by emphasizing the anti-teleological aspect of their approach, they regard failed attempts, dead ends, and unachieved projects as inherent parts of writing process.

Looking from a more general perspective, in my view, genetic criticism is a variety of historical, or more precisely, biographical approaches to literature. Claiming that knowledge of the context is necessary to understand a literary work, these approaches focus on historical and biographical circumstances in which a text is written. In a similar way, the object of genetic analysis is not a literary text alone but a literary text and the context of textual materials and the author’s experiences, all of which have contributed to the existence or creation of the final text. Naturally, in genetic criticism, the context is very limited: the focus is not on society, ideas, or influences, but on an author’s writing practices.

My main theoretical sources and analytical models originate from the works of various French scholars: Pierre-Marc de Biasi, Almuth Grésillon, Louis Hay, and Daniel Ferrer.<sup>65</sup> In particular analyses, I also refer to other studies, which are listed in the bibliography. In Finnish and Hungarian academe, genetic criticism has been recognized, but it has not been much practiced. There are, however, some exceptions, which have been inspiring for this thesis. Two Finnish scholars should be mentioned here: Hanna Karhu, who wrote her dissertation on the genesis of Otto Manninen’s<sup>66</sup> poems, and Veijo Pulkkinen, whose

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<sup>63</sup> See the website of ITEM: <http://www.item.ens.fr>.

<sup>64</sup> Pierre-Marc de Biasi, *Génétique des textes* (Paris: CNRS, 2011), 37–38.

<sup>65</sup> De Biasi, *Génétique des textes*; Almuth Grésillon, *Éléments de critique génétique* (Paris: PUF, 1994); Almuth Grésillon, *La mise en œuvre: Itinéraires génétiques* (Paris: CNRS, 2008); Louis Hay, *La littérature des écrivains: Questions de critique génétique* (Paris: Corti, 2002); Daniel Ferrer, *Logiques du brouillon: Modèles pour une critique génétique* (Paris: Seuil, 2011).

<sup>66</sup> Otto Manninen (1872–1950). Acknowledged poet, translator.



dissertation analyzes textual variations of Aaro Hellaakoski's<sup>67</sup> poem *Me kaksi* (The two of us).<sup>68</sup> In 2010, a special issue of a Finnish literary journal, *Avain* (Key), was devoted to textual and genetic criticism.<sup>69</sup> In Hungary, Ágnes Kelevéz has written a dissertation on the genesis of Mihály Babits's poems.<sup>70</sup> It is also important to mention a 1989 special issue of the journal *Helikon*<sup>71</sup> that was devoted to questions of genetic criticism and Attila Debreczeni's attempt of a genetic edition of Mihály Csokonai's<sup>72</sup> letter.<sup>73</sup> Relatedly, consider the recently launched critical and genetic edition of the complete works of Dezső Kosztolányi.<sup>74</sup> By 2013, two novels, *Édes Anna* (Anna Édes) and *Nero, a véres költő* (Darker Muses, the Poet Nero), and one collection of short stories, *Esti Kornél* (Kornél Esti), have appeared.<sup>75</sup> The novels include previous versions of the manuscripts running parallel to the final text, while in the short stories previous versions are marked in footnotes. Each of the three hefty volumes includes an extensive afterword where genesis of the given work is discussed.

The present thesis uses genetic criticism as the main methodological framework, but, occasionally, the analysis relies upon two other approaches: biographical approach, and criticism of sources. The archival sources have given me insight into many previously unknown details of Szentkuthy's biography from the years 1925–34. Since the biographical data that I discovered are significant and valuable—if not for genetic criticism, then at least for Szentkuthy studies—I decided to include them in the present thesis. If at times the archival material does not allow me to reconstruct the genesis, it does reveal a source that Szentkuthy exploited when writing *Prae*. In such cases, the source is indicated, even if it is not followed by genetic analysis. Thus, to a certain degree, this thesis is concerned with questions of intertextuality, which is here understood in a narrow sense as the criticism of sources.<sup>76</sup>

At the end of this section I would like to clarify my theoretical position concerning the more general question of literary criticism. Throughout this thesis I speak about Szentkuthy, his ideas, and his imagination, emphasizing the meaning intended by the author at the expense

<sup>67</sup> Aaro Hellaakoski (1893–1952). Acknowledged poet.

<sup>68</sup> Hanna Karhu, *Säkeiden synty: Geneettinen tutkimus Otto Mannisen runokäsikirjoituksista* [The birth of “Säkeet”: A genetical study of Otto Manninen's poetry manuscripts] (Helsinki: Yliopistopaino, 2012); Veijo Pulkkinen, *Epäilyksen estetiikka: Tekstuaalinen variaatio ja kirjallisen teoksen identiteetti* [The aesthetics of suspicion: Textual variation and the identity of a literary work] (Oulu: Oulun yliopisto, 2010). For more bibliographic sources in Finnish research see: Karhu, *Säkeiden synty*, 18–21.

<sup>69</sup> *Avain*, no. 3 (2010).

<sup>70</sup> Ágnes Kelevéz, *A keletkező szöveg esztétikája: Genetikai közelítés Babits költészetéhez* [Aesthetics of a germinating text: Genetical approach to Babits's poetry] (Budapest: Argumentum, 1998).

<sup>71</sup> *Helikon* 35, no. 3–4 (1989).

<sup>72</sup> Mihály Csokonai Vitéz (1773–1805). Acknowledged poet.

<sup>73</sup> Attila Debreczeni, “Kísérlet egy Csokonai-szöveg genetikai kiadására,” [Attempt of a genetical edition of Csokonai's text], *Irodalomtörténeti közlemények* 98, no. 1 (1994): 77–87.

<sup>74</sup> Dezső Kosztolányi (1885–1936). Acknowledged poet, writer, translator.

<sup>75</sup> Dezső Kosztolányi, *Édes Anna*, ed. András Veres, unnumbered volume of *Kosztolányi Dezső Összes Művei* [Collected works of Dezső Kosztolányi], ed. Mihály Szegedy-Maszák and András Veres (Bratislava: Kalligram, 2010); Dezső Kosztolányi, *Nero, a véres költő*, ed. László Takács, unnumbered volume of *Kosztolányi Dezső Összes Művei*; Dezső Kosztolányi, *Esti Kornél*, ed. Júlia Tóth-Czifra and András Veres, unnumbered volume of *Kosztolányi Dezső Összes Művei*.

<sup>76</sup> Criticism of sources, as it has been defined by Gustave Rudler, consists in two operations: finding the sources—experiences, works of art, texts—which influenced a given work, and characterizing the way they were adapted. Here I restrict myself to the first operation. See Gustave Rudler, “Critique de sources,” chap. 6 in *Les techniques de la critique et de l'histoire littéraires*, 117–39.

of that which is inherent in the text. Although an explicitly author-oriented position is rather rare in contemporary literary studies, I do believe that knowledge of the writer's (intellectual) biography is, and should be, an integral part of literary criticism.

Let me make a short detour and discuss the distinction between author- and text-oriented approaches. The former stance, popular in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century, reduces meaning of a work to an author's intention. The latter approach, widely accepted since the second half of 20<sup>th</sup> century until nowadays, regards the author's intention as irrelevant in the meaning of a work. The two approaches are often seen as two opposing trends in literary criticism; however, in his book *Literature, Theory, and Common Sense*, Antoine Compagnon shows that the intentionalist and anti-intentionalist position, as he calls them, should not be considered as alternatives that exclude each other, but rather as complementary perspectives.<sup>77</sup> Compagnon admits that in a theoretical debate it is tempting to take black-and-white positions, but in the practice of reading and teaching we tend to take both views into consideration. Thus Compagnon claims a literary work has two meanings: the original, which is intended by the author, and the anachronistic, which refers to the contemporary context of the reader. The question is not one of taking sides but of specifying the perspective of the analysis. The two meanings do not exclude each other. Compagnon aptly demonstrates that, on the one hand, even the most eager anti-intentionalists do suppose a minimum of intention. His example from Barthes's *S/Z* is elucidating. Barthes's analysis of Balzac's short story *Sarrasine* is one of the most radically text-oriented studies, and still in the middle of the study, in order to support his arguments, Barthes refers to Balzac's other short story, *The Unknown Masterpiece*. By this, Compagnon observes, Barthes must implicitly assume that meaning is not only inherent in the text but can also be traced back to the author of the two stories. Compagnon continues by claiming that, despite the radicality of the anti-intentionalist position, in reality, most scholarly readings and analyses do rely on the original meaning. He concludes his argument in the spirit of compromise:

Some commentators (philologists) emphasize original meaning and others (critics) current signification. No one, or hardly anyone, expressly prefers an anachronistic meaning to the original meaning, or knowingly rejects data that would clarify the original meaning. Implicitly, all commentators (or nearly all) admit the existence of an original meaning, but all are not prepared to make the same effort to elucidate it.<sup>78</sup>

In other words, the question is not which of the two meanings is correct but which a researcher decides to explore. A researcher might want to investigate the anachronistic meaning but this does not mean that the original meaning should be regarded as irrelevant.

As should already be clear, in this thesis I often take the author-oriented ("philologist," or "positivist") perspective, which means that I am interested in the writer's ideas, imagination, and his biography. In other words, what I am interested in is not only the text of *Prae*, but also Szentkuthy, the person who wrote *Prae*. Also, each time I talk about exegesis or explanation of *Prae*, I refer to Szentkuthy's intended meaning. Naturally, in Compagnon's spirit of

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<sup>77</sup> Antoine Compagnon, *Literature, Theory, and Common Sense*, trans. Carol Cosman (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004), chap. 2.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, 61.

common sense, I do not deny the existence of anachronistic meaning, and I do agree that *Prae* can also be read and studied without reference to Szentkuthy's intention. It is clear that looking for the author's intention is not the only possible way of reading literature. However, I do believe that contextual information concerning a writer should be—and for the most part is—taken into consideration by literary critics. I am aware that literary criticism does not have means to fully investigate a writer's consciousness, but I do not think that this should lead us to a radical epistemological skepticism. Even if it is impossible to fully know a writer's intention, historical documents—such as *avant-textes*, letters, and diaries—provide additional information on the author's ideas, and by this they bring us closer to the intended meaning of his text.

One of the reasons for my choice of perspective is the diary character of *Prae*, a fact that has already been observed by some scholars.<sup>79</sup> Not only *Prae* but also most of Szentkuthy's oeuvre has a strong diary quality, e.g., *Towards the One and Only Metaphor*, or numerous passages in the first six volumes of the *Orpheus* cycle. In consequence, we might consider Szentkuthy not only a writer, but also a thinker, or simply somebody who documented in his writings his experiences, thoughts, and emotions. It can never be overemphasized that the two approaches do not exclude each other; in other words, *Prae* can be read both as a purely literary text, and as a record of the young Szentkuthy's experiences. Consider his description of the performance of *Intrigue and Love*, which Leatrice recalls in chapter 11 of *Prae* (see 3.4).<sup>80</sup> In a late interview, Szentkuthy describes exactly the same details of the performance of *Intrigue and Love* as his own memory from a theater in Berlin.<sup>81</sup> In other words, the passage in *Prae* can be read in a double way: either as Leatrice's memory and hence part of the novel, or as Szentkuthy's own experience, which he later framed as Leatrice's thoughts.

If *Prae* were the only record at our disposal, the author-oriented approach would undoubtedly remain purely speculative. However, the point I am trying to make here is that the author-oriented analysis can also take into consideration *avant-textes*, as well as correspondence, diary, and other historical documents. In effect, the author-oriented approach provides more information than do approaches which concentrate only on the text. The advantage of the intentionalist approach will become clear in chapter 5. As two examples in chapter 5 show, the *avant-textes* of *Prae* contain much richer material than the final text. In consequence, investigating the *avant-textes* increases our knowledge—if not about *Prae* than at least about Szentkuthy himself.

To conclude, let me recall Compagnon's claim: although it is tempting for a literary scholar to take a radical position and to claim that literary criticism should be concerned only with texts, in the everyday practice of teaching, reading, and researching, most scholars implicitly do use biographical data. This, the diary character of *Prae*, as well the richness of information provided by the *avant-textes* are the three reasons why I believe that, in the case of *Prae*, the author-oriented approach is especially fruitful.

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<sup>79</sup> See for example Gintli, "Szentkuthy Miklós," 761–62.

<sup>80</sup> *P II*, 130–32.

<sup>81</sup> *FH*, 102–3.

## 1.5 Structure of the Thesis

The thesis is divided into seven chapters. Chapter 1 (Introduction) presents the background and the goals of this thesis (1.1), briefly summarizes *Prae* (1.2), summarizes its reception and the previous research (1.3), presents the method of genetic criticism and the theoretical presuppositions of my study (1.4). Next follows a synopsis of *Prae* (1.6), and finally, a short presentation of Szentkuthy's works and their reception (1.7).

Chapter 2 presents, describes, and dates the documentary material analyzed in the thesis. The chapter is divided into three parts. The first part (2.2) concerns the exogenetic material, that is, books that Szentkuthy read during his work on *Prae*. The second part (2.3) presents the endogenetic material, that is, the material which documents the actual work on the text: the manuscript (2.3.1), drafts (2.3.2), unpublished fragments (2.3.3), proofs (2.3.4), table of contents, the second edition (2.3.5), and other minor documents (2.3.6). The third part (2.4) lists the epitexts, that is, letters and interviews, which are not documents of genesis per se, but which provide auxiliary data about the writing process.

Chapter 3 offers a chronological survey of the genesis of *Prae*. Section 3.2 deals with Szentkuthy's early experiences, which preceded the actual work on *Prae*. Sections 3.3–3.7 analyze the writing process, which is divided into five stages. In the first stage (autumn 1928–October 1931), Szentkuthy began to write part 1 of *Prae*. In the second stage (late 1931–March 1932), he completed part 1 and began to work on part 2. In the third stage (April 1923–late 1932), he expanded part 1 with three lengthy additions and finalized part 2. In the fourth stage (December 1932–May 1933), he wrote part 3. In the fifth stage (May 1933–April 1934), which is subdivided into four periods, Szentkuthy corrected the manuscript and completed it with additions. The five stages are dealt with respectively in sections 3.3–3.7. Each section discusses the material written in a given stage, as well as the actual state of the novel. The analysis is completed with extensive biographical data. Section 3.8 discusses in brief the later editions of *Prae*.

Chapters 4, 5, and 6 analyze three writing operations employed by Szentkuthy in the course of his work on *Prae*. Chapter 4 analyzes the genesis of additions that Szentkuthy attached to the manuscript of *Prae* in the final stage of its composition. The final stage began in May 1933, when, after finishing the third part of *Prae*, Szentkuthy began to prepare his manuscript for publication. At the same time, new books and new experiences provided him with new thematic material, which he wanted to include in his novel. He therefore decided to complete the manuscript with additions, which he wrote on small pieces of paper and attached to the main text with paper clips. The chapter begins by describing the circumstances of the genesis of the additions (4.2). Then, a short overview of the new themes introduced by the additions is given (4.3). Section 4.4 analyzes a minor but interesting case of two additions that produced some narrative incoherences in the final text. Section 4.5 draws conclusions for future research.

Chapter 5 analyzes two examples of the writing technique, which I name “obscuring suppression.” The technique consists in the suppression of draft material, in effect of which the final text becomes more concise but also less understandable than its draft. As a result of

this operation, clear and fully developed ideas from the primary versions become vague and elliptic in the final text. The first analysis (5.2) concerns drafts of a fragment that I name *Development of pain* (the fragment is in chapter 4 of *Prae*). The drafts include three similes that were suppressed in the final text, as a result of which the scene described in the printed text is more elliptic and less vivid than the draft material. Next (5.3), a draft to *Interpolation* (fragment of chapter 2 of *Prae*) is analyzed. The draft presents a system of correspondences between various concepts including a term from Heidegger's *Being and Time*. In the final text, however, the relation of Heidegger's term to the rest of the text is not indicated. Section 5.4 is a digression on obscuring suppression in Flaubert's writing. Section 5.5 shows how the results of the analysis can be used in future research on *Prae*.

Chapter 6 analyzes four cases of the technique that I call "immediate absorption." The principle of this technique is that, when in the course of writing, Szentkuthy comes across an interesting inspirational source, he immediately incorporates it into the text he is currently working on. The chapter analyzes four cases of immediate absorption: Bergsonian motifs influenced by the books he read in the summer of 1932 and used in the part of *Prae* written at that time (6.2); books on physics that he read in the summer of 1933 and which influenced the vocabulary of additions and corrections to the part of *Prae* which he edited at that time (6.3); works by Heidegger and Husserl that Szentkuthy also read in the summer of 1933 and which made him use German philosophical terms in the additions and corrections to the same part of *Prae* (6.4); and finally, Szentkuthy's memories of the alpine landscapes, which he included in the additions to the Exeter parson's diary, which he was editing after his return from Switzerland in the autumn of 1933 (6.5). Section 6.6 draws conclusions for future research.

Chapter 7 (conclusions) summarizes the results and shows how new knowledge can be used in future research on *Prae*. Firstly, it will be possible to make a distinction between the main text and the additions, which can be treated as two thematically different sets. Secondly, the thesis shows that it is worth studying the drafts since they present richer and more complete records of what the writer wanted to convey in his novel. Thirdly, it will be useful to compare particular fragments of the novel with Szentkuthy's readerly and personal experiences from the same time; in this way, it will be possible to reveal unknown sources of the given fragments.

The bibliography is divided into archival sources, works by Szentkuthy, books and articles on Szentkuthy, works concerning genetic criticism, and other works. Finally, the Appendix presents a history of the writing process in a synoptic table, which is followed by an exhaustive list of additions, and eight images of Szentkuthy's manuscripts as well as notes from some of the books that he read.

## 1.6 Synopsis of *Prae*<sup>82</sup>

When *Prae* appeared in 1934, it was divided into three parts. In the second (1980) and third edition (2004), the tripartite division was abolished: the book appeared in two volumes subdivided into fourteen chapters, so that parts 1, 2, and 3 became respectively chapters 1–8, chapters 9–13, and chapter 14 (see table 1). The following synopsis takes into account both divisions.

**Table 1** Correspondence between the first and the following editions of *Prae*

<i>Prae</i> , 1 <sup>st</sup> edition (1934): 3 parts	<i>Prae</i> , 2 <sup>nd</sup> (1980) and 3 <sup>rd</sup> (2004) edition: 2 volumes, 14 chapters	
Part	Volume	Chapters
1	1	1–8
2	2	9–13
3		14

The novel opens with a prefatory chapter that includes a résumé of four articles written by one of the main protagonists, Leville-Touqué, a French philosopher, writer, and editor-in-chief of a periodical called *Antipsyché*. In the first article, entitled *Outline of a Starting-Point, or New Composition*, Touqué analyzes the process of literary creation starting from the first sensory stimulus up until the finished text. The article begins with a description of a hat that Touqué sees in a shop window in Paris. The hat fascinates him, but his girlfriend is not impressed by it and refuses to spend her money on such “nonsense.” Touqué leaves the girl, outraged by her miserliness. His anger is a stimulus from which three elements of a literary work emerge: a vision of a sunflower; a plan of a story about a prioress who escapes from an abbey and becomes the leader of the Turkish army; and the description of a ship in construction in the Venice docks. Finally, when the elements are ready, Touqué attempts to relate them to the main theme, which is his miserly girlfriend, and tries to form a composition out of them. In the second article (*Towards a New Culture of Wordplay, or About the Rules of Dogmatic Accidentalism*), Touqué discusses his theory of “wordplay.” Having christened a hypochondriac woman writer Hippopotondra Stylopotama, a portmanteau word that combines “hypochondriac,” “stylo,” and “hippopotamus,” Touqué proceeds to formulate the principles of his ontology, according to which all phenomena in the world can be understood as analogous to “wordplay.” In other words, everything is always a combination of many elements. In the third article, entitled *Man-Style and Man-Sache*, Touqué reflects on the nature of human emotions and comes to the conclusion that they are not essentially human qualities but cosmic forces received by humans. He also theorizes a new type of novel in which the protagonist’s soul and body would be described in separate sections. The fourth article (*Elegance and Schisma Moralis*) also deals with the possibilities of novel writing:

<sup>82</sup> The first version of this synopsis was published in Sikorski, “Introductory Remarks on Miklós Szentkuthy’s *Prae*,” 74–79. A synopsis of *Prae* is also available in Hungarian: Dénes Zoltai, “PRAE,” in *66 híres magyar regény* [66 famous Hungarian novels], ed. Éva Székely (Budapest: Móra, 1992), 442–51.

while traditional novels include a description of both milieu and story line, in the future, postulates Touqué, there will be separate milieu-novels and story-novels.

At the beginning of chapter 2, the actual plot begins. We encounter two English students, Halbert and Anny, on a summer morning in the city of Cannes. They are on their way to *Perspective*, a nightclub where Leatrice Achariol-Zaninoff—the central character of *Prae*—has her apartment. Leatrice is a Russian Jewish interior designer who works as a prostitute in *Perspective* but wishes to quit her job and begin a new, spiritual life. As Halbert and Anny arrive at *Perspective*, they meet Leville-Touqué and Leatrice's friend Ena. The story is then interrupted by Touqué's interior monologue, which lasts for more than 160 pages and does not conclude until the end of chapter 4. At the beginning of the monologue, Touqué compares the nature of teenage and mature desire: while a teenager wants nothing more than to possess a woman's body, a mature man—that is, Touqué himself—also appreciates the social game that precedes intercourse. The thesis is followed by numerous analogies from art, design, and science that illustrate the difference between two types of desire. Touqué's monologue is intersected with three italicized sections that have no connection to the main line of thoughts. In the first section, entitled *Interpolation*, the author declares that he has failed to give an accurate description of his interior experience, which he refers to with the term *Non-Prae*. What he envisages to do is to express his experience in an indirect way, but he does not specify how he is going to do that. The second italicized passage (entitled the *First Non-Prae-diagonal*) describes a man waking up at dawn in a hotel on the Riviera. The girl with whom the man spent the night is not there. He goes out to the beach and finds her lying near a palm grove. Chapter 2 closes with the *Second Non-Prae-diagonal*, which describes the emotional predicament of a man trapped in a love “quadrangle” with three women: his wife and two lovers. The man is having dinner with his lover when a serviette ring falls down the stairs. When the man goes to look for it, he notices a letter from another lover floating on the pond. He is afraid that the girl might see the letter. At the same time he is anxious because he knows he has to return home to his wife.

In chapter 3, Touqué continues the monologue but abandons the analysis of desire and reflects upon his childhood. In a series of flashbacks, he reminisces about his parents, his mother's boutique in Cannes, his mental illness and stay in a clinic, a morning in Cannes when he was sent to fetch a dress from the boutique to a seamstress, and another morning when he observed the Riviera landscape from the window of his bathroom. Touqué's memories are interrupted by one more italicized passage, the *Third Non-Prae-diagonal*, in which a woman named Yvonne calls her lover to cancel their rendezvous because she is going to confession. Eventually, she does not go to the church but instead invites her friend Geraldine to come over.

Chapter 4 begins with a description of a marine landscape by Jacques Bournol, a fictional painter. After observing that the components of the picture, although situated next to each other, lack a unifying perspective, Touqué tries to apply a similar technique to his writing. He begins the *Antipsyché Idylls*—as he names his literary project—by describing a scene in a cloakroom after a concert: a man takes his coat and notices a woman in the throng. These events seem to be interconnected, says Touqué, but in reality there is no continuity between

them. In order to show discontinuity between the two actions, he associates them with two totally different images: taking a coat brings to mind the story of a man whose lover shot herself in a hotel room while the woman in the throng is associated with a silent, nocturnal landscape. At the end of chapter 4, the two different types of desire (teenage and adult) are recapitulated.

In chapter 5, Touqué's monologue finally comes to an end and we are back at *Perspective* where Ena, Touqué, Halbert, and Anny discuss Leatrice's decision to abandon her job. Ena supports Leatrice, whereas Touqué, Halbert, and Anny accuse her of hysteria and pseudo-mysticism. The protagonists' discussion is regularly interspersed with Leville-Touqué's reflections about Leatrice. At the end of the discussion, Ena calls a taxi, and the two friends leave *Perspective*. In the taxi, Leatrice recollects her childhood at the Russian countryside, where she lived until she was nineteen. One of her memories concerns her uncle Péter, an ex-soldier and an alcoholic who influenced her significantly when she was a child. Leatrice's memories are followed by an important narratorial comment about the function of the retrospection technique: the aim of the flashback is not to provide information about Leatrice's past, but to present Leatrice in a new milieu. Briefly, we are back in the taxi with Leatrice and Ena, but we soon shift into Ena's memories of the scholarship she received to go to Norway: she recollects her stay in an extravagant clinic run by a group of lesbians engaged in a cult of the female body. Finally, the two friends arrive at a hotel, where Leatrice decides to rent a room with a sea view. In front of the hotel, they meet two girls, Yvonne Valmian and Hilde Strauss, who turn out to be Leatrice's new neighbors.

In chapter 6, we are introduced to two side characters: Veronica Chamaedrys and Ulva di Chara. Veronica is one of the hotel guests. She is beautiful and elegant and Leatrice is jealous of the attention she enjoys. One morning Veronica meets her friend Ulva di Chara in the harbor. Ulva tells Veronica the circumstances of the break-up with her boyfriend. While walking with him in a forest, a heavy rain broke out. They made love in the rain, after which the boyfriend ran away. As the chapter closes, we return to Leatrice, who concludes she would rather be with Halbert than with Leville-Touqué.

At the beginning of chapter 7, Leatrice is on the hotel terrace contemplating the sea and recollecting events from her past. Firstly, she recalls a performance of *Timon of Athens* in Moscow for which she designed the stage and played the main role. Leatrice's second memory brings us to her first rendezvous with Halbert in a nightclub called *Woodcut*. The memory is followed by a long digression describing Leatrice in her room, at the moment when she decided that she would go and meet Halbert. The main theme of the digression is the difference between human and instinctual love. The first type of love is rational. It follows the generally accepted social norms and it is crowned by marriage. The second—and the superior—type of love is an irrational passion close to madness that is not concerned with social norms. Rationality and irrationality are then illustrated by the architectural plans of two different churches. At the end of the digression, Szentkuthy contends that his overwritten style is an attempt to express something that the words cannot name, and which he refers to as *Non-Word*.



When chapter 8 begins, we are still within Leatrice's memory. When Halbert finally arrives, the narrative suddenly shifts to another level and the events in *Woodcut* turn out to be a scene directed by a man endowed with superhuman power, for whom Leatrice is only a protagonist in his vision. Then, another director appears and they begin to show each other their visions wherein elements change and transform in a surrealistic way. One of the visions presents a woman planning an abortion. She phones a doctor to arrange a meeting. Suddenly, her house is invaded by a herd of monkeys, who then change into water and begin to foam. Next, the spirit of the unborn child appears in the guise of Donatello's David asking the woman for life. At one point, the vision is interrupted to give way to Touqué's ruminations. Finally, when the doctor is ready to carry out the abortion, a figure of death appears with a flock of ravens and takes everyone with him. The final pages of chapter 8 describe a fashionable Parisian woman; the description has no narrative connection with the preceding story.

Chapter 9 opens part 2 of *Prae*. Like chapter 1, it has an introductory character. The chapter consists of theoretical reflections on the possibilities of presenting Leatrice in *Prae*. The first possibility is a short story in which the plot is organized around a cardinal's sister, who, as it turns out in the end, has never existed. The second one is a catalogue of girls dressed in swimming suits; Szentkuthy describes the first four girls of the catalogue. The third possibility is a description of a woman's clothes coupled with a man's longing for the woman. First, in a lengthy passage, three elements of women's clothes are analyzed in full detail: a shoe, a stocking, and a shoulder strap. The description of clothes is followed by the story of a boy, whose girlfriend became pregnant. The boy wants to kill her since he considers her pregnancy a treachery (she chose social life over romance). The chapter is one of the most cryptic parts of *Prae*. Since none of these possibilities explicitly mentions Leatrice, it is unclear what Szentkuthy means when he regards them as attempts to build his heroine. Perhaps instead of "describing" we should rather say "suggesting"? Could the three stories in some vague way suggest the existence of Leatrice? The main idea of the chapter is not fully understandable and still remains in need of clarification. The chapter ends with the pessimistic conclusion that no plan can ever be realized and thus every attempt at describing Leatrice is doomed to fail.

At the beginning of chapter 10, we find Leatrice on the terrace of a nightclub (perhaps again *Perspective*?) looking out at the sea. Touqué and Halbert now appear only in her memories, whereas Ena and Anny are never mentioned. What Leatrice wants to do is to express her inner world of emotions, which, until now, she has not shared with anyone. In order to realize her goal, she recollects the moments of her life when she was close to finding a proper form of expression. In a series of non-chronological flashbacks, interwoven with memories of yesterday's party and a vision of champagne glasses, she recalls the following scenes: her reflection in a mirror when bidding good-bye to a lover; combing her hair in front of a mirror; her first morphine injection followed by a bath; grey light seen through a skylight; a winter afternoon with her sisters Mária and Márta; waiting for her uncle Péter with her eyes fixed on a clock. The memories are interrupted by the *Fourth Non-Prae-diagonal*, the diary of an Italian princess who is planning to leave her husband and escape with her lover. The

princess recalls how happy she was with her lover in the empty palace while the husband was away. When the princess's uncle becomes a new pope, she confesses everything to him and decides to return to her husband. The pope, however, is crazy. He kills the princess's husband and has her lover's statue built. At the end, the princess and her lover manage to escape.

Chapter 11 opens with Leatrice watching the sea. Once again a series of childhood memories follows. Leatrice recalls her uncle Péter's affairs, her feeling of loneliness, a postcard that she once received as a Christmas gift, and a detail from the stage design of *Intrigue and Love*, which she saw in Berlin. The chapter is crowned by the *Fifth Non-Prae-diagonal*, the diary of the tutor of the children of the aristocracy. The tutor ponders whether he should remain a scholar or reject science and immerse himself in the life of intuitive cognition. Gradually, the diary turns out to be a love letter. Tired of his lover, who idolizes him too much, the tutor is planning to write a story entitled *Honeymoon*. In the story (which takes place in Geneva's La Grange Park), he reveals his vision of happiness, which consists not in loving the person but the whole world. The letter ends with two other stories. The first one is about a cardinal going to church in a torrential rain. The second is about a missionary whom the tutor met in a harbor and who said he would phone him. Suddenly, the phone is ringing and the tutor does not know if it is the missionary or his lover. He does not answer the phone.

Chapter 12 recounts an episode of Leatrice's uncle Péter's life. On a cold, dark winter afternoon, Péter is going to his lover and is waiting for a ferry on the shore of a river. The local sexton, who is sitting in a pub, notices Péter and invites him in. After that, a short digression about the sexton follows. At the end, Péter finally manages to cross the river. Throughout the chapter, we learn about Péter's unsuccessful love life: while despising women for being sinful, he continually fantasized about them, which eventually led to his self-destruction. The chapter ends with the last diagonal, the *Sixth Non-Prae-diagonal*, which is a grotesque and eventful story about a fisherman's daughter and a Chinese princess. The fisherman is a Christian sailor living in China. A Chinese princess who wants to become her look-alike captures his daughter. Then a young prince, Ming-Hsi, draws near on a ship, in order to marry the princess, while a young boy (the missionaries' child) falls in love with the fisherman's daughter. The daughter kills the princess and lives with Ming-Hsi, who does not notice the difference between them. The boy commits suicide, and the fisherman finds his head in the river. Before killing himself, the boy designs a church that is meant to express the impossibility of knowing another person.

Chapter 13 describes Leatrice's meeting with an actress, Zvinskaya, a morphinist, a beautiful woman and fascinating person who strongly influences Leatrice's life. The chapter includes descriptions of Zvinskaya and Leatrice's contemplations on philosophical themes, such as, for instance, simplicity and complexity. They are followed by an analysis of Leatrice's rebellion against Péter's lifestyle. At one point, Leatrice's memories abruptly end and give way to Touqué's ruminations. Suddenly, Touqué's analyses end and we find him sitting in an armchair and listening to a discussion between three women: Tilia Parvifolia, Potentilla, and Ajuga. It is unclear whether the scene is an element of the story or only

Touqué's vision. Chapter 13 (and part 2 of *Prae*) ends with the plan of a short story about Tilia's sister's romance with a bishop.

Chapter 14, which is at the same time part 3 of the novel, consists of meditations (or, in the first edition, a diary) of Halbert's father, a sexagenarian parson at Exeter. On a foggy winter's evening, he is sitting in an armchair watching the Exeter cathedral through his window. As the bell in the cathedral strikes seven, he begins to tell the story of his unhappy life. Due to its fragmented and intricate structure, the chapter is difficult to summarize, but it is possible to distinguish two main parts. In the first part, Halbert's father recalls how the relationship with his wife began. He also talks extensively about his morphinic visions and regrets being unable to translate them into language. Finally, he recalls the women whom he loved and he reflects on the nature of love and beauty, which are for him not human qualities but impersonal elements in human beings. In the second part, the parson describes two episodes from his life. First, he recollects kissing a girl in Switzerland. The memory is followed by a long analysis of the girl's dress, which was originally beige but then dyed green. The description of the dress is followed by numerous associations with the color green, which has always had a special meaning for the parson. Next, he recalls meeting a mentally handicapped girl on a meadow between Cambridge and Ely. The memory is interspersed with a long reflection upon Christian love and the nature of virtue and sin. One of the most important thoughts is the idea of "ethical *Sachlichkeit*," according to which virtue is not a human quality but a non-human element that can be found even in entirely immoral people. At the end of the chapter the parson analyzes the handicapped girl's speech and describes how they made love under a tree. The chapter, and by extension the whole novel, ends abruptly and without a conclusion.

## 1.7 Szentkuthy's Biobibliography and the Reception of his Works<sup>83</sup>

This section provides additional information on Szentkuthy's biography, his literary output, and its reception in Hungary. The section mentions *Prae* only cursorily. For more information on *Prae*'s reception, see section 1.3. For more information on Szentkuthy's life during the writing of *Prae*, see chapter 3.

Szentkuthy was born 2 June 1908 in Budapest as Miklós Pfisterer. During the first years of his childhood, the Pfisterer family lived in a poor district of Pest. In 1914, they moved to Buda, where Szentkuthy resided until the end of his life. In 1926, he graduated from high school and enrolled at the Péter Pázmány University to study English, French, and Hungarian philology. In 1927, he adopted "Szentkuthy" as his pen name. In the summer of 1928, at the age of twenty, together with his father, Szentkuthy set out on a journey around the countries of Occidental Europe. Already some years before this Grand Tour, Szentkuthy was planning to write a novel. During the summer of 1928, his ideas finally crystallized when he envisioned writing a monumental novel displaying a panorama of European culture of the nineteen

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<sup>83</sup> I published some parts of this section earlier as an article (in Hungarian). Filip Sikorski, "Szentkuthiana 1988–2011," *Spectrum Hungarologicum* 7 (2013): 159–170, accessed 25 February 2014, <https://jyx.jyu.fi/dspace/bitstream/handle/123456789/42749/07SpectrumHungarologicum.pdf?sequence=1>.

twenties. Back in Budapest, in the autumn of 1928, Szentkuthy began to write his novel. In the meantime, he worked on a doctoral thesis on Ben Jonson's plays, which he submitted in March of 1931. In October of 1931, he married Dóra Eppinger (Dolly), whom he knew from his university classes. Between November 1931 and March 1932, Szentkuthy and Dolly stayed in London. There, in the library of the British Museum, Szentkuthy was working on his habilitation thesis, which was never finalized; instead, he resumed working on his novel. In the autumn of 1932, back in Budapest, he began to work as an English teacher. Szentkuthy worked as a teacher in different schools until his early retirement in 1958.

In May 1934, after six years of work, Szentkuthy published his first novel *Prae*,<sup>84</sup> which he advertised as the first Hungarian representative of modern 20<sup>th</sup>-century prose, and which he compared to the works by Proust, Joyce, and Huxley.<sup>85</sup> With the plot reduced to a bare minimum, *Prae* consisted mostly of the characters' and the narrator's interior monologues. The novel provoked much discussion in Budapestian literary circles but, due to its immense difficulty, it remained largely unread. After the publication of *Prae* in June of 1934, Szentkuthy began to work on his next book, which he referred to as *Alkibiades*.<sup>86</sup> He published some parts of it in literary journals,<sup>87</sup> but the whole book remained forgotten and was published only posthumously in 1995 with the title *Narcissus's Mirror* (*Narcisszusz tükre*).<sup>88</sup> Like *Prae*, the novel consists mostly of monologues, but it includes more plot, and more dialogues, which were inspired by Shakespeare's plays.<sup>89</sup> In the autumn of 1935, Szentkuthy published a collection of his diary notes written in the summer of 1935, under the name *Towards the One and Only Metaphor* (*Az egyetlen metafora felé*).<sup>90</sup> According to the author's words, his second book was written to illustrate that he was not a dry intellectual—as the critics of *Prae* suggested—but a sensitive human being.<sup>91</sup> *Towards the One and Only Metaphor* consists of a series of 112 diary entries of varying length and for this reason it is one of the most approachable of Szentkuthy's books. After the publication of *Metaphor*—as the book is often nicknamed in Hungary—Szentkuthy continued to write his diary, but its second part, *The Almanac of Humility* (*Az alázat kalendáriuma*), was not published until after his death.<sup>92</sup> Szentkuthy's third book, *Chapter on Love* (*Fejezet a szerelemről*), was published in 1936.<sup>93</sup> Like *Prae*, the plot of *Chapter* is scant and the novel consists mainly of monologues. However, the novel marked a turning point in Szentkuthy's writing: starting with *Chapter on Love*, which takes place in the early Renaissance, Szentkuthy turned away from modernity and began to pursue an interest in history.

<sup>84</sup> Miklós Szentkuthy, *Prae* (Budapest: Királyi Magyar Egyetemi Nyomda, 1934).

<sup>85</sup> Miklós Szentkuthy, *Advertising Leaflet of "Prae,"* Szentkuthy's library.

<sup>86</sup> Szentkuthy to Dolly, 26 June 1934.

<sup>87</sup> The fragments were reprinted in a collection of short stories. Miklós Szentkuthy, *Iniciálék és ámenek: Összevűjtött elbeszélések, hangjátékok, bábjátékok* [Initials and amens: Collected short stories, radio plays, and puppet shows], ed. Mária Tompa (Budapest: Szépirodalmi, 1987), 7–13, 23–46.

<sup>88</sup> Miklós Szentkuthy, *Narcisszusz tükre*, ed. Mária Tompa (Budapest: Magvető, 1995).

<sup>89</sup> Dolly's diary, 30 January 1935.

<sup>90</sup> Miklós Szentkuthy, *Az egyetlen metafora felé* (Budapest: Királyi magyar egyetemi nyomda, 1935).

<sup>91</sup> *FH*, 389.

<sup>92</sup> Miklós Szentkuthy, *Az alázat kalendáriuma (1935–1936)*, ed. Mária Tompa (Budapest: Magvető, 1998).

<sup>93</sup> Since the first edition is essentially unavailable, I refer here to the second edition. Miklós Szentkuthy, *Fejezet a szerelemről*, 2<sup>nd</sup> rev. ed. (Budapest: Szépirodalmi, 1984).

In 1937, inspired by his visit to Northern Italy, Szentkuthy began to plan his magnum opus, a series of historical novels, entitled the *Saint Orpheus Breviary* (*Szent Orpheus Breviáriuma*). As the writer himself explained, “breviary” refers to the fragmentary composition of the novels, “Orpheus” to the author himself, who travels through the darkness of the history of humanity, whereas “saint” refers to his emerging interest in spirituality and religion.<sup>94</sup> Up until 1942, Szentkuthy published six parts of the cycle: *Marginalia on Casanova* (*Széljegyzetek Casanovához*) (1939), *Black Renaissance* (*Fekete Reneszánsz*) (1939), *Escorial* (*Eszkoriál*) (1940), *Europa Minor* (1941), *Cynthia* (1941), and *Confession and Puppet Show* (*Vallomás és bábjáték*) (1942). While *Prae* was a work that few people read but which at least provoked some discussion, *Orpheus* met with almost no critical response. The cycle consists of short texts from different genres: narrative, meditation, essay, diary, reading notes, poems. In each part of the *Orpheus* cycle, Szentkuthy records his own aesthetic, intellectual, and personal experiences under the guise of different characters: Casanova, Monteverdi, Brunelleschi, Queen Elisabeth Tudor, or a young (fictional) scholar from Cambridge. What is characteristic in Szentkuthy’s approach to history are anachronisms. For instance, at the beginning of *Black Renaissance*, Monteverdi writes a letter in which he mentions Freud, a French film magazine, and sport life in California.<sup>95</sup> Each part of the cycle concerns different aspects of the world’s cultural heritage. *Marginalia on Casanova* is Szentkuthy’s comments on Casanova’s memoirs. *Black Renaissance* concerns the themes of Venice and Brunelleschi. *Escorial* is a parody of Hitler’s Germany disguised as the Mongolian Empire.<sup>96</sup> In *Europa Minor*, Szentkuthy continues the Asian themes (Japan, India, Mongolia) but the last chapter concerns Catalonia. *Cynthia* is about Elisabeth Tudor but can also be read as an autobiographical *roman à clef*. *Confession and Puppet Show* includes a long meditation followed by a continuation of Brunelleschi’s story from *Black Renaissance*.

During the war and the period of Stalinist terror that followed, Szentkuthy continued to write novels but for political reasons he could not publish them. In 1948 he stayed for several months in London after which he returned to Budapest and never traveled again. Concentrating on his work, he rarely left his apartment, although he did receive many visitors. The year 1957 marked the beginning of a new creative period. Since Szentkuthy could not continue his *Orpheus* cycle, he resorted to write, as he called them, “Pseudo-Orpheuses,”<sup>97</sup> that is, quasi-biographical novels in which biographical data were indistinguishably mixed with fantasy. Between 1957 and 1967, Szentkuthy published five novels, whose heroes were Mozart (Szentkuthy’s favorite composer),<sup>98</sup> Haydn,<sup>99</sup> Goethe,<sup>100</sup> Dürer,<sup>101</sup> and Händel.<sup>102</sup>

<sup>94</sup> FH, 405.

<sup>95</sup> SZOB I, 173.

<sup>96</sup> FH, 472–73.

<sup>97</sup> “Ál-Orpheusok.” Miklós Szentkuthy, *Harmonikus tépott lélek: Réz Pál videobeszélgetése Szentkuthy Miklóssal* [A harmonious ripped soul: Pál Réz’s video interview with Miklós Szentkuthy], ed. Mária Tompa (Budapest: Magvető, 1994), 123.

<sup>98</sup> Miklós Szentkuthy, *Divertimento: Változatok Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart életére* [Divertimento: Variations on the life of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart] (Budapest: Magvető, 1957).

<sup>99</sup> Miklós Szentkuthy, *Doktor Haydn* (Budapest: Zeneműkiadó, 1959).

<sup>100</sup> Miklós Szentkuthy, *Arc és álarc* [Face and mask] (Budapest: Magvető, 1962).

<sup>101</sup> Miklós Szentkuthy, *Saturnus fia: Dürer életregénye* [Son of Saturn: A novel about Albrecht Dürer] (Budapest: Corvina, 1966).

Apart from these biography-novels, he also published some less significant historical novels.<sup>103</sup> As in *Prae* and *Orpheus*, plots in Szentkuthy's biographical and historical novels are almost non-existent: they seem to be a series of scenes rather than narratives. What is new about Szentkuthy's late novels is that the philosophical parts are limited and more space is given to the description of characters and scenes. As for the style, Szentkuthy's late novels are sober and rather tame; they lack the vigor, freshness, and audacity that were so typical of *Prae*.

Besides being a writer, Szentkuthy was also an essayist and translator. In 1968, he published a long essay on Maupassant in the form of a book.<sup>104</sup> In 1969, his first collection of essays appeared. The collection was reissued in an expanded version in 1985.<sup>105</sup> Szentkuthy's most important translations include *Gulliver's Travels* (1952),<sup>106</sup> *Spartacus* (1953),<sup>107</sup> and *Oliver Twist* (1955),<sup>108</sup> all of which were republished numerous times. His most significant achievement is undoubtedly *Ulysses* (1974), although his translation has recently been criticized.<sup>109</sup> In a very informative article, Dávid Szolláth has shown that while some translational solutions are brilliant, Szentkuthy's work lacks coherence: a character's name is translated in two different ways, there is no difference in the characters' style of speech, Joyce's system of cross-references is not retained, to name only a few flaws of Szentkuthy's translation.<sup>110</sup> Recently, a research group (András Kappanyos, Marianna Gula, Gábor Zoltán Kiss and Dávid Szolláth) corrected the translation and published a new improved version of *Ulysses* in 2012.<sup>111</sup>

The 1970s marked the beginning of Szentkuthy's renaissance. In 1972, he could finally return to *Orpheus* and publish the seventh part of the cycle.<sup>112</sup> Then, in 1973, the first six parts were republished together with the seventh part, in two volumes.<sup>113</sup> In 1974, the eighth part, *Canonized Despair* (*Kanonizált Kétségbeesés*), appeared in a separate volume,<sup>114</sup> after which, in 1976, all three volumes were again republished.<sup>115</sup> In 1980, *Prae* was republished in a new,

<sup>102</sup> Miklós Szentkuthy, *Händel* (Budapest: Zeneműkiadó, 1967).

<sup>103</sup> Miklós Szentkuthy, *Burgundi Krónika* [Burgundy chronicle] (Budapest: Magvető, 1959); Miklós Szentkuthy, *Hitvita és nászinduló: Két elbeszélés* [Religious debate and wedding march: Two stories] (Budapest: Magvető, 1960); Miklós Szentkuthy, *A megszabadított Jeruzsálem* [Jerusalem liberated] (Budapest: Magvető, 1965); Miklós Szentkuthy, *Szárnyatlan oltárok* [Wingless altars] (Budapest: Magvető & Szépirodalmi, 1978). The volume *Hitvita és nászinduló* includes two short novels: *Wittenberg* and *Bizánc* [Byzantium], whereas *Szárnyatlan oltárok* includes *Burgundi krónika* and *Wittenberg*.

<sup>104</sup> Miklós Szentkuthy, *Maupassant egy mai író szemével* [Maupassant in a contemporary writer's eyes] (Budapest: Gondolat, 1968).

<sup>105</sup> Miklós Szentkuthy, *Meghatározások és szerepek* [Definitions and roles] (Budapest: Magvető, 1969); Miklós Szentkuthy, *Múzsák testamentuma: Összegyűjtött tanulmányok, cikkek, bírálatok* [Testament of the Muses: Collected studies, articles, reviews], ed. Mária Tompa (Budapest: Magvető, 1985).

<sup>106</sup> Jonathan Swift, *Gulliver utazásai*, trans. Miklós Szentkuthy (Budapest: Szépirodalmi, 1952).

<sup>107</sup> Howard Fast, *Spartacus*, trans. Miklós Szentkuthy (Budapest: Szépirodalmi, 1953).

<sup>108</sup> Charles Dickens, *Twist Olivér*, trans. Miklós Szentkuthy (Budapest: Új Magyar, 1955).

<sup>109</sup> James Joyce, *Ulysses*, trans. Miklós Szentkuthy (Budapest: Európa, 1974).

<sup>110</sup> Dávid Szolláth, "Leletmentés: Válogatott szentkuthyzmusok az Ulysses szövegében" [Rescue excavation: Selected Szentkuthysms in the text of "Ulysses"], *Alföld*, no. 9 (2010): 64–73. The article is available online on the website of Magyar Tudományos Akadémia (Hungarian Academy of Science), accessed 25 October 2013, [http://mta.hu/fileadmin/I\\_osztaly/eloadastar/SzollathD\\_Ulysses.pdf](http://mta.hu/fileadmin/I_osztaly/eloadastar/SzollathD_Ulysses.pdf). Citations refer to the online version.

<sup>111</sup> James Joyce, *Ulysses*, trans. Miklós Szentkuthy, corrected by Marianna Gula et al. (Budapest: Európa, 2012).

<sup>112</sup> Miklós Szentkuthy, *II. Szilveszter második élete* [The second life of Silvester II] (Budapest: Magvető, 1972).

<sup>113</sup> Miklós Szentkuthy, *Szent Orpheus Breviáriuma*, 2 vols (Budapest: Magvető, 1973).

<sup>114</sup> Miklós Szentkuthy, *Szent Orpheus Breviáriuma*, vol. 3, *Kanonizált kétségbeesés* (Budapest: Magvető, 1974).

<sup>115</sup> Miklós Szentkuthy, *Szent Orpheus Breviáriuma*, 3 vols, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Budapest: Magvető, 1976).

more reader-friendly form (see 3.8). The book was edited by Szentkuthy's secretary and close friend, Mária Tompa. After the second edition of *Prae*, in 1984, Szentkuthy published the ninth part (and at the same time the fourth volume) of the *Orpheus* cycle, *Bloody Donkey* (*Véres Szamár*).<sup>116</sup> Next, two more early works were reissued: *Chapter on Love* (1984)<sup>117</sup> and *Towards the One and Only Metaphor* (1985).<sup>118</sup> In 1983, Szentkuthy gave a series of interviews, which were later edited by Tompa and published in June of 1988 in one large volume as *Frivolities and Confessions* (*Frivolitások és hitvallások*).<sup>119</sup> The interview volume is the last book that Szentkuthy published before he died. On 18 July 1988, Miklós Szentkuthy died at the age of eighty, leaving the final part of the *Orpheus* cycle unfinished. Some fragments of the tenth volume were later published by Tompa.<sup>120</sup>

After Szentkuthy's death, Tompa dedicated her life to overseeing Szentkuthy's legacy and publishing the works that remained in manuscript form. She has also written articles on Szentkuthy<sup>121</sup> and created a website for his work.<sup>122</sup> Between 1988 and 2013, she discovered, edited, and published manuscripts of nine earlier, unknown works: in 1990, a novel about Cicero entitled *Cicero's Journeyman Years* (*Cicero vándorévei*) (written in 1945);<sup>123</sup> in 1991, *Robert Baroque* (*Barokk Róbert*) (written in 1927), an early semi-autobiographical novel;<sup>124</sup> in 1993, Szentkuthy's reading notes on Augustine's works,<sup>125</sup> and the tenth—incomplete—volume of *Orpheus*;<sup>126</sup> in 1994, a short novel written in the 1940s, *Bianca Lanza di Casalanza*;<sup>127</sup> in 1995, *Narcissus's Mirror*; in 1998, *The Almanac of Humility*; in 2000, *Europe is Closed* (*Bezárult Európa*) (written in 1949);<sup>128</sup> in 2001, early diary notes and illustrations from the 1920s and 1930s entitled *The Play of Pains and Secrets* (*Fájdalmak és titkok játéka*);<sup>129</sup> and, most recently, in 2009, a short novel from 1946–47, *Pendragon and Apollo XIII* (*Pendragon és XIII. Apolló*).<sup>130</sup> The last four books published featured Szentkuthy's drawings on their covers. The archives of PIM still hold many unknown manuscripts that await discovery and publication. It is possible that, in the future, new novels

<sup>116</sup> Miklós Szentkuthy, *Szent Orpheus Breviáriuma*, vol. 4, *Véres Szamár* (Budapest: Magvető, 1984).

<sup>117</sup> Szentkuthy, *Fejezet a szerelemről*.

<sup>118</sup> Miklós Szentkuthy, *Az egyetlen metafora felé*, 2<sup>nd</sup> rev. ed. (Budapest: Szépirodalmi, 1985).

<sup>119</sup> Miklós Szentkuthy, *Frivolitások és hitvallások*, ed. Mária Tompa (Budapest: Magvető, 1988).

<sup>120</sup> Miklós Szentkuthy, *Euridiké nyomában: Szent Orpheus Breviáriumának töredékben maradt V. kötete* [In search of Euridike: The fifth fragmentary volume of the Saint Orpheus Breviary], ed. Mária Tompa (Budapest: Magvető, 1993).

<sup>121</sup> I mention here only two of the most important articles: Mária Tompa, "Mit ér Freud, ha nincs hozzá Pinocchio?" [Of what avail is Freud if there is no Pinocchio?], *Bárka*, no. 1–2 (1999): 81–88; Mária Tompa, "Rajz és szöveg összefüggése Szentkuthy Miklós életművében" [Relation of drawing and text in Miklós Szentkuthy's works], *Üzenet*, no. 4–6 (2000): 177–189, accessed 25 October 2013, [http://www.szentkuthymiklos.hu/hu\\_kepmagyarazat.html](http://www.szentkuthymiklos.hu/hu_kepmagyarazat.html).

<sup>122</sup> Miklós Szentkuthy's official webpage, accessed 25 October 2013, <http://www.szentkuthymiklos.hu>.

<sup>123</sup> Miklós Szentkuthy, *Cicero vándorévei*, ed. Mária Tompa (Budapest: Szépirodalmi, 1990).

<sup>124</sup> Miklós Szentkuthy, *Barokk Róbert*, ed. Mária Tompa (Pécs: Jelenkor, 1991).

<sup>125</sup> Miklós Szentkuthy, *Ágoston olvasása közben* [While reading Augustine], ed. Mária Tompa (Pécs: Jelenkor, 1993).

<sup>126</sup> Szentkuthy, *Euridiké nyomában*.

<sup>127</sup> Miklós Szentkuthy, *Bianca Lanza di Casalanza*, ed. Mária Tompa (Pécs: Jelenkor, 1994).

<sup>128</sup> Miklós Szentkuthy, *Bezárult Európa*, ed. Mária Tompa (Budapest: Magvető, 2000).

<sup>129</sup> Miklós Szentkuthy, *Fájdalmak és titkok játéka: Naplójegyzetek és naplójegyzetek és naplójegyzetek 1925–1942* [The play of pains and secrets: diary notes and diary illustrations 1925–1942] (Budapest: Magvető, 2001).

<sup>130</sup> Miklós Szentkuthy, *Pendragon és XIII. Apolló*, ed. Mária Tompa (Budapest: Magvető, 2009).

by Szentkuthy may appear. Besides the aforementioned works, many earlier works were republished posthumously. For instance, in 2004, the third edition of *Prae* appeared,<sup>131</sup> while in 2008, which was the centenary of Szentkuthy's birth, the first part of the *Orpheus* cycle, *Marginalia on Casanova*, came out in a special jubilee edition.<sup>132</sup> In 2013, Szentkuthy became a posthumous member of the Digital Literary Academy (Digitális Irodalmi Akadémia) digitalization program and since December of 2013 his works have been gradually appearing online on the PIM website.<sup>133</sup>

Other works that appeared after Szentkuthy's death but which were not novels include five books published by Hamvas Intézet publishing house: in 2001, the memories of Szentkuthy's pupils,<sup>134</sup> in 2006, collected interviews;<sup>135</sup> in 2007, selected dedications;<sup>136</sup> in 2008, selected correspondence;<sup>137</sup> and in 2012, a new volume of Szentkuthy's essays.<sup>138</sup> The collected interviews and essays were edited by Márton Molnár, whose master's thesis on Szentkuthy was also published by Hamvas Intézet.<sup>139</sup> What should also be mentioned here is an abridged version of a 12 hours long film interview done by Pál Réz in 1986, which appeared as *A Harmonious Ripped Soul*.<sup>140</sup> Finally, let us mention two photo albums: one (edited by Márta Parragi) presenting Szentkuthy's library,<sup>141</sup> and another, which includes selected photos from the Szentkuthy Estate.<sup>142</sup> The latter album was edited by Katalin Hegyi, Szentkuthy's close friend, who is also the author of his short biography.<sup>143</sup>

A significant work that needs to be mentioned here is Szentkuthy's diary, which was written from 1932 until his death in 1988. The diary comprises hundreds of thousands of pages, and, according to Szentkuthy, it is his most significant work.<sup>144</sup> According to Szentkuthy's last will, the first part of the diary (written between 1932 and 1948) was to be opened 25 years after his death, that is, on 18 July 2013. Unfortunately, as of October 2013, the diary remains unavailable to researchers. The second part of the diary (written between 1948 and 1988) will be opened 50 years after his death, in 2038.

<sup>131</sup> Miklós Szentkuthy, *Prae*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Budapest: Magvető, 2004).

<sup>132</sup> Miklós Szentkuthy, *Szent Orpheus Breviárium I: Szélgjegyzetek Casanovához* (Budapest: Magvető, 2008).

<sup>133</sup> See the website of the Digital Literary Academy: <http://www.pim.hu/object.520C95E1-0B0C-4309-9747-AC736B8281A4.ivy>.

<sup>134</sup> Mária Tompa, ed., *Égő katedra: Visszaemlékezések Szentkuthy Miklósról* [Burning teacher's desk: Remembering Miklós Szentkuthy] (Budapest: Hamvas Intézet, 2001).

<sup>135</sup> Miklós Szentkuthy, *Az élet faggatottja: Beszélgetések Szentkuthy Miklóssal* [The Interrogatee of life: Conversations with Miklós Szentkuthy], ed. Márton Molnár (Budapest: Hamvas Intézet, 2006).

<sup>136</sup> Miklós Szentkuthy, *Örök közelség, ezer emlék: Szentkuthy Miklós válogatott dedikációi* [Eternal closeness, a thousand memories: Miklós Szentkuthy's selected dedications], ed. Mária Tompa (Budapest: Hamvas Intézet, 2007).

<sup>137</sup> Miklós Szentkuthy, *Válogatott levelezése* [Selected correspondence], ed. Mária Tompa (Budapest: Hamvas Intézet, 2008).

<sup>138</sup> Miklós Szentkuthy, *Varázskert: Tanulmányok, esszék, előadások* [Magical garden: Studies, essays, lectures], ed. Márton Molnár (Budapest: Hamvas Intézet, 2012).

<sup>139</sup> Márton Molnár, *Napló és regény Szentkuthy Miklós műveiben* [Diary and novel in Miklós Szentkuthy's works] (Budapest: Hamvas Intézet, 2003).

<sup>140</sup> Szentkuthy, *Harmonikus tépett lélek*.

<sup>141</sup> Márta Parragi, *Szentkuthy Miklós könyvtára* [Miklós Szentkuthy's library] (Budapest: PIM, 2008).

<sup>142</sup> Katalin Hegyi, ed., *Titkok játéka: Válogatás Szentkuthy Miklós fényképhagyatékából* [Play of secrets: Selected photos from Miklós Szentkuthy's estate] (Budapest: PIM, 2009).

<sup>143</sup> Katalin Hegyi, *Szentkuthy Miklós* (Budapest: Elektra, 2001).

<sup>144</sup> *ÉF*, 107.



It is only after Szentkuthy's death that his books began to appear in other languages. We owe the French translations to André Velter, a French poet and journalist, who in 1987 interviewed Szentkuthy and published an article about him in *Le Monde*.<sup>145</sup> After that, he helped Szentkuthy to establish connections with French publishers. From 1990 to 2006, the first four volumes of *Orpheus* were published by Éditions Phébus.<sup>146</sup> *Marginalia on Casanova* was a success, for in 1991 it was fifth on the Figaro list of bestsellers. Besides *Orpheus*, Phébus also published *Frivolities and Confessions* in 1999.<sup>147</sup> The ex-director of Phébus, Jean-Pierre Sicre, wrote an essay about his experience as Szentkuthy's publisher, which can be found in the 2013 special Szentkuthy issue of the journal *Hyperion: On the Future of Aesthetics*.<sup>148</sup> Apart from Phébus, four other books were published by José Corti,<sup>149</sup> and one book by Seuil.<sup>150</sup> Some parts of the *Orpheus* cycle were also published in Portuguese and Spanish.<sup>151</sup> Aside from being translated into some of the principal literary languages of Western culture, two of Szentkuthy's works were translated into less prevalent languages: *Divertimento* (Mozart's fictional biography) was translated into Slovakian (the first complete book of Szentkuthy's to be translated into another language),<sup>152</sup> and *Bianca Lanza di Casalanza*, which was translated into Romanian in 1999.<sup>153</sup>

In 2012, Rainer J. Hanshe, an American writer and the owner of Contra Mundum Press, published *Marginalia on Casanova* in English.<sup>154</sup> The book, which was the first ever work by Szentkuthy to appear in English, received very positive reviews. *The Guardian* described Tim Wilkinson's translation as "brilliant" and "awe-inspiring"<sup>155</sup> and chose *Casanova* as one of the best books of the year 2013.<sup>156</sup> *Casanova* was followed by *Towards the One and Only*

<sup>145</sup> André Velter, "Miklós Szentkuthy, l'ogre alchimiste," *Le Monde*, 31 July 1987.

<sup>146</sup> Miklós Szentkuthy, *En marge de Casanova*, trans. Georges Kassaï and Zéno Bianu (Paris: Phébus, 1991); Miklós Szentkuthy, *Renaissance noire*, trans. Georges Kassaï and Zéno Bianu (Paris: Phébus, 1991); Miklós Szentkuthy, *Escorial*, trans. Georges Kassaï and Robert Sctrick (Paris: Phébus, 1993); Miklós Szentkuthy, *Europa minor*, trans. Georges Kassaï and Robert Sctrick in collaboration with Élisabeth Minik (Paris: Phébus, 2006).

<sup>147</sup> Miklós Szentkuthy, *La confession frivole: autobiographie d'un citoyen du Temps*, trans. Georges Kassaï, Zéno Bianu, Robert Sctrick (Paris: Phébus, 1999).

<sup>148</sup> Jean-Pierre Sicre, "Rencontre avec Miklós Szentkuthy: À l'écoute du rire de Dieu," *Hyperion: On the Future of Aesthetics* 7, no. 2 (18 July 2013): 30–40, accessed 25 October 2013, [http://www.contramundum.net/Hyperion/Documents/1.3--JPSicre-Recontre\\_SzM.pdf](http://www.contramundum.net/Hyperion/Documents/1.3--JPSicre-Recontre_SzM.pdf).

<sup>149</sup> Miklós Szentkuthy, *Vers l'unique métaphore*, trans. Eva Toulouze (Paris: Corti, 1991); Miklós Szentkuthy, *En lisant Augustin*, trans. Eva Toulouze (Paris: Corti, 1991); Miklós Szentkuthy, *Robert Baroque*, trans. Georges Kassaï and Gilles Bellamy (Paris: Corti, 1997); Miklós Szentkuthy, *Le Calendrier de l'humilité*, trans. Georges Kassaï and Dominique Radányi (Paris: Corti, 1998).

<sup>150</sup> Miklós Szentkuthy, *Chronique Burgonde*, trans. Georges Kassaï and Zéno Bianu (Paris: Seuil, 1996).

<sup>151</sup> Miklós Szentkuthy, *À margem de Casanova*, trans. Telma Costa (Lisboa: Teorema, 1992); Miklós Szentkuthy, *Escorial*, trans. Telma Costa (Lisboa: Teorema, 1999); Miklós Szentkuthy, *A propósito de Casanova*, trans. Judit Xantus Szarvas (Madrid: Siruela, 2002); Miklós Szentkuthy, *Renacimiento negro*, trans. Adan Kovacsics (Madrid: Siruela, 2007).

<sup>152</sup> Miklós Szentkuthy, *Divertimento*, trans. Katarina Králová (Bratislava: Tatran, 1990).

<sup>153</sup> Miklós Szentkuthy, *Bianca Lanza di Casalanza*, trans. Georgeta Hajdu (Bucarest: Univers, 1999).

<sup>154</sup> Miklós Szentkuthy, *Marginalia on Casanova*, trans. Tim Wilkinson (New York: Contra Mundum Press, 2012).

<sup>155</sup> Nicholas Lezard, review of *Marginalia on Casanova*, by Miklós Szentkuthy, *The Guardian*, 4 January 2013, accessed 25 October 2013, <http://www.theguardian.com/books/2013/jan/04/marginalia-on-casanova-szentkuthy-review>.

<sup>156</sup> Nicholas Lezard, "The best paperback books of 2013," *The Guardian*, 5 December 2013, accessed 25 February 2014, <http://www.theguardian.com/books/2013/dec/05/best-paperback-books-of-2013>.

*Metaphor* in 2013.<sup>157</sup> In the coming years, at least four more translations into English are going to appear, including the first volume of *Prae*, which is due out at the end of 2014.

As for Szentkuthy's reception, section 1.3 lists the most important studies on *Prae*. Here, I mention only those studies that are not included in 1.3. Between the 1930s and 1960s, Szentkuthy's work did not receive much academic reception. Although, starting from the 1970s, his oeuvre has gradually gained acceptance amongst some factions, until now only two doctoral dissertations have been written on him. The first, entitled *Stílus és téma* (Style and theme), was defended in 1993 by Péter Bálint. The thesis was published in an expanded version in 2003 as *Szentkuthy álruhában* (Szentkuthy disguised).<sup>158</sup> Bálint attempts to read Szentkuthy's works (mainly *Orpheus*, *Metaphor*, and *Almanac of Humility*) from a thematic perspective. He is interested in the author's psychology and in how the relation between diary and fiction is articulated in Szentkuthy's oeuvre. The second dissertation, entitled *Szent Orpheus arcképe: Szentkuthy Miklós írói munkássága* (The portrait of Saint Orpheus: Miklós Szentkuthy's literary output), was written by Gyula Rugási in 1994. A part of the thesis was published as a book, another part as an article.<sup>159</sup> Like Bálint, Rugási is concerned mostly with *Orpheus*. He analyzes themes and topoi, and he is especially interested in the Christian thematics of Szentkuthy's works. Later, Rugási edited a volume of collected essays on Szentkuthy that he entitled *A mítosz mítosza* (The myth of the myth).<sup>160</sup> Then there is József J. Fekete's monograph, *Post*,<sup>161</sup> in which Fekete also approaches Szentkuthy's oeuvre thematically, but, unlike Bálint and Rugási, his interest is exhaustive and he has commented on almost every work of Szentkuthy's. Many other scholars have devoted one or several articles to Szentkuthy. Consider Gábor Tolcsvai Nagy, who has analyzed the style of Szentkuthy's prose.<sup>162</sup> Due to space limitations, I cannot list all studies on Szentkuthy here; let me, however, mention several journals that have dedicated a special issue to Szentkuthy:

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<sup>157</sup> Miklós Szentkuthy, *Towards the One and Only Metaphor*, trans. Tim Wilkinson (New York: Contra Mundum Press, 2013). It should be added that, already in 2008, some excerpts of *Metaphor* were published on the website *Hungarian Literature Online* thanks to the initiative of the website's editor, Ágnes Orzóy. For recent responses to Szentkuthy's book, see Hanshe's essay: "To Humanize and Dehumanize: Imitation, True Contrasts, and the Faustian Pact," *Hungarian Literature Online*, accessed 25 February 2014, <http://www.hlo.hu/news/to-humanize-and-dehumanize-imitation-true-contrasts-and-the-faustian-pact>. See also David van Dusen's review of the book: "The Most Mysterious Thing in Life," *The Times Literary Supplement*, 7 February 2014.

<sup>158</sup> Péter Bálint, *Szentkuthy álruhában: Közelítések egy gigantikus napló írójához* [Szentkuthy disguised: Approaches to the writer of a gigantic diary] (Budapest: Széphalom Könyvműhely, 2003).

<sup>159</sup> Gyula Rugási, *Szent Orpheus arcképe* (Budapest: Pest Szalon, 1992); Gyula Rugási, "Kant és az egér," *Orpheus* 5, no. 1 (1994), 65–90.

<sup>160</sup> Gyula Rugási, ed., *A mítosz mítosza: In memoriam Szentkuthy Miklós* [The myth of the myth: In memoriam Miklós Szentkuthy] (Budapest: Nap, 2001).

<sup>161</sup> József J. Fekete, *Post: Szentkuthy Miklós és művei* [Post: Miklós Szentkuthy and his works] (Novi Sad: Forum, 2005).

<sup>162</sup> Gábor Tolcsvai Nagy, "A párhuzamos ellentét jelentésstiliztikája Szentkuthy Miklós prózájában (Fejezet a szerelemről, 1936)" [The Semantic stylistics of parallel contradiction in Miklós Szentkuthy's prose (*Chapter on Love*, 1936)], in *Stilisztika és gyakorlat* [Stylistics and practice], ed. István Szathmári (Budapest: Nemzeti Tankönyvkiadó, 1998), 268–79; Gábor Tolcsvai Nagy, "'Új szójáték-kultúra felé avagy a dogmatikus akcidentalizmus szabályairól': Szentkuthy és a nyelv" ["Towards a new culture of wordplay, or about the rules of dogmatic accidentalism": Szentkuthy and language], in *Nem találunk szavakat: Nyelvértelmezések a mai magyar prózában* [We find no words: Language interpretations in contemporary Hungarian prose] (Bratislava: Kalligram, 1999), 110–27.

*Magyar Műhely* (1974),<sup>163</sup> *Textuerre* (1988),<sup>164</sup> *Orpheus* (1994),<sup>165</sup> *Thélème* (1998),<sup>166</sup> *Europe* (2001),<sup>167</sup> *Forrás* (2002),<sup>168</sup> *Lyukas óra* (2005),<sup>169</sup> *Prae* (2008),<sup>170</sup> *Kloaka* (2011)<sup>171</sup> and most recently, in July of 2013, the online journal of Contra Mundum Press, *Hyperion: On the Future of Aesthetics*, which I co-edited with Rainer J. Hanshe.<sup>172</sup>

At the end of this section, let me close by speaking of the reception of Szentkuthy's oeuvre in Hungary. On the one hand, despite a number of articles and books, all in all, the academic reception of Szentkuthy's novels has been quite meagre. Given his prodigious output, Szentkuthy is with all certainty one of the most underresearched writers in the Hungarian academe. On the other hand, he remains an extremely important author among Hungarian writers and intellectuals. The academic reception, albeit limited, has attempted to contextualize Szentkuthy's works and to define the main features of his poetics. Contextualization, however, has proved difficult. Some scholars have pointed out Szentkuthy's affinity with Proust, Joyce, even Rabelais, but there is no general consensus as to which literary tradition (if not several) Szentkuthy belongs to. On the contrary, many scholars tend to see Szentkuthy's oeuvre as absolutely unique and falling beyond literary schools and trends.

As to the main characteristics of his works, scholars situate his oeuvre at the boundary of fiction, diary, and philosophical essay. Szentkuthy's works are thus basically fictional, but for the most part the author uses the narrator and the characters to relate his own experiences, or to reflect on philosophical themes. It has been noted that plots in Szentkuthy's novels are highly scant. While his works are almost entirely devoid of narrative tension, much space is given to meditations and very precise descriptions. What scholars also point out is the fragmentary form of Szentkuthy's works, which usually consist of a series of fragments with very loose narrative links. What has also been observed is Szentkuthy's penchant for surprising associations, as well as his linguistic inventiveness.

The scope of this thesis does not allow me to discuss Szentkuthy's impact on Hungarian postmodern and contemporary literature. However, it can be said that all of the aforementioned characteristics make Szentkuthy a paradigmatic figure for all of those authors who prefer philosophizing and playing with language to using traditional narrative. Finally, it should also be noted that, with few exceptions, both scholars and Szentkuthy enthusiasts tend to consider *Prae* to be his most significant work—more significant than *Orpheus* and the biographical and historical novels. Thus, even though throughout his life Szentkuthy wrote dozens of novels, he is still best known as the author of *Prae*.

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<sup>163</sup> *Magyar Műhely* 12, no. 45–46 (1974).

<sup>164</sup> *Textuerre*, no. 62 (Summer 1988).

<sup>165</sup> *Orpheus* 5, no. 1 (1994).

<sup>166</sup> *Thélème*, Spring 1998.

<sup>167</sup> *Europe* 79, no. 868–869 (August–September, 2001).

<sup>168</sup> *Forrás* 34, no. 3 (2002).

<sup>169</sup> *Lyukas óra* 14, no. 11 (November 2005).

<sup>170</sup> *Prae*, no. 36 (2008).

<sup>171</sup> *Kloaka* 2, no. 3 (December 2011).

<sup>172</sup> *Hyperion: On the Future of Aesthetics* 7, no. 2 (18 July 2013), accessed 25 October 2013, <http://contramundum.net/hyperion/archive/volume-vii-issue-2/>.

## 2 Genetic dossier

### 2.1 Introduction

The first step of a genetic analysis involves determination and a description of the documentary material, which the geneticists refer to as a “genetic dossier.” The present thesis adopts the following definition of a genetic dossier: “A set of written documents which can be afterwards attributed to a certain literary project no matter whether it was published or not.”<sup>173</sup> The genetic dossier of *Prae* therefore includes all of the documents related to Szentkuthy’s work on *Prae*. The aim of this chapter is to present, to describe, and to date the documents of the genetic dossier of Miklós Szentkuthy’s *Prae*.

The genetic dossier is sometimes called the *avant-texte*, a term coined by Jean Bellemin-Noël.<sup>174</sup> These two terms are often used synonymously, although some scholars have attempted to distinguish between them. For instance, to de Biasi, the *avant-texte* is “the genetic dossier made accessible and intelligible,” that is, transcribed, classified, and chronologically organized.<sup>175</sup> What is problematic about this definition is that the concept of the *avant-texte*, being in the singular, easily brings to mind one piece of text, and not a set of texts, as Bellemin-Noël wanted it.<sup>176</sup> For this reason, I propose the following terminological correction: I shall retain the name genetic dossier when referring to the set of all of the documents *en bloc*, while the term *avant-texte* will be used to denote one particular document, such as the manuscript, a draft, or a note. In other words, we could say that the genetic dossier of *Prae* is a set of many *avant-textes*.

Since it is impossible to know what documents future research might reveal, the genetic dossier is always open to changes (such was the case, for instance, with *In Search of Lost Time* when, in 1986, more than sixty years after Proust’s death, a new, highly abridged typescript of *Albertine disparue* was found).<sup>177</sup> This notice is especially important in Szentkuthy’s case, whose documentary legacy is exceptionally rich and far from fully catalogued. At the beginning of 2013, during the reorganization of the Szentkuthy archive, new material was found (mainly drafts and notes), but it remains unavailable to researchers. Furthermore, in July of 2013, the first part of Szentkuthy’s diary was opened. The diary comprises notes from the years 1932–1948. The material still needs to be organized and, at this time (as of October 2013), it remains unavailable to researchers. In order to have a full picture of the Szentkuthy Archive, we must wait till at least 2038, when, in accordance with Szentkuthy’s last will, the second part of the diary (1948–1988) will be opened. The present

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<sup>173</sup> “Un ensemble constitué par les documents écrits que l’on peut attribuer dans l’après-coup à un projet d’écriture déterminé dont il importe peu qu’il ait abouti ou non à un texte publié.” Grésillon, *Éléments de critique génétique*, 109.

<sup>174</sup> Jean Bellemin-Noël, *Le texte et l’avant-texte: Les brouillons d’un poème de Milosz* (Paris: Larousse, 1972).

<sup>175</sup> “C’est le dossier de genèse rendu accessible et intelligible.” De Biasi, *Génétique des textes*, 69.

<sup>176</sup> Bellemin-Noël, 15.

<sup>177</sup> Nathalie Mauriac Dyer, *Proust inachevé: Le dossier “Albertine disparue”* (Paris: Honoré Champion, 2005); Nathalie Mauriac Dyer, “Proust entre deux textes: réécriture et ‘intention’ dans *Albertine disparue*,” in *La création en acte: Devenir de la critique génétique*, ed. Paul Gifford and Marion Schmid (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2007), 83–96.

thesis analyzes only those documents that are catalogued and available to researchers. However, it should be remembered that, with the course of time, more documents are likely to appear, and it is quite possible that some of them might include material related to *Prae*.

Even if the genetic dossier can never be fully complete, it should be “as complete as it is possible,”<sup>178</sup> that is, as complete as the actual state of knowledge enables it to be. The present study has therefore striven to find all possible catalogued documents that relate to the genesis of *Prae*. Let us, however, note that, much as the genetic dossier should be as complete as possible, the thesis analyzes only some of the *avant-textes*. The aim of genetic analysis is not to analyze each and every *avant-texte* but to discern particularities in the author’s writing method. Some *avant-textes* provide more information and are therefore more suitable for analysis. For this reason, some documents are analyzed in great detail, while others are only cursorily mentioned.

It should also be noted that the genetic dossier is always a result of a critical study. In other words, an *avant-texte* is never a part of a dossier by itself; it is always the critic who establishes the dossier and decides which documents are part of it.<sup>179</sup> What follows, as Hay points out, is that two researchers might establish two different dossiers.<sup>180</sup> Whether to include an *avant-texte* in the dossier or not is a matter of interpretation.

The documents included in the genetic dossier of *Prae* are situated in two places. Most of the documents can be found in the archives at PIM. Szentkuthy’s books are officially part of the PIM archive, but they have remained in the writer’s apartment. I will use the designations PIM and “Szentkuthy’s library” in order to distinguish between these two collections.

The genetic dossier of *Prae* can be divided into three groups. The first two groups include the documents to which I refer to as “exogenetic” and “endogenetic.” The distinction is based on Raymonde Debray Genette’s concepts of exogenesis and endogenesis.<sup>181</sup> Exogenesis is a process of background research, gathering sources and inspiration for the work, whereas endogenesis is a process of planning, writing, and editing the text. The exogenetic material includes books that Szentkuthy used as sources while working on his novel. The endogenetic material contains the manuscript, drafts, and proofs of *Prae*. The third group of *avant-textes* includes the so-called epitexts, that is, the material that provides additional data about the genesis of *Prae*, such as Szentkuthy’s letters, or interviews.

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<sup>178</sup> “Aussi complet que possible.” Pierre-Marc de Biasi, “La critique génétique,” 21.

<sup>179</sup> Grésillon, *Éléments de critique génétique*, 108–9.

<sup>180</sup> Louis Hay, “Le texte n’existe pas: Réflexions sur la critique génétique,” *Poétique*, no. 62 (Avril 1985): 152.

<sup>181</sup> Raymonde Debray Genette, *Métamorphoses du récit: Autour de Flaubert* (Paris: Seuil, 1988), 23–31. See also Pierre-Marc de Biasi, “Qu’est-ce qu’un brouillon? Le cas Flaubert: Essai de typologie fonctionnelle des documents de genèse,” in *Pourquoi la critique génétique? Méthodes, théories*, ed. Michel Contat and Daniel Ferrer (Paris: CNRS, 1998), 45–50.

## 2.2 Exogenetic Material

Exogenetic material includes books which Szentkuthy read during his work on *Prae* and which he used as sources. Not every source can be considered a part of the genetic dossier. A book should contain a material trace of the writer's work, such as marginalia, or, in this particular case—dates. A book with no material trace remains only a hypothetical exogenetic document.<sup>182</sup> Thus, although Szentkuthy's library includes thousands of books,<sup>183</sup> many of them bought in the 1920s and the early 1930s, only some of them can be considered a part of *Prae*'s exogenetic material.

We should stress here that most of the analysis in chapter 6 of this thesis is based on the dates that can be found in Szentkuthy's books. The dates allow us to specify when Szentkuthy was reading a particular book. Since many parts of the manuscript of *Prae* are also dated, I was able to compare the books read by Szentkuthy with the texts that he was simultaneously writing. This comparison has led me to the conclusion that the writer had a habit of directly incorporating his reading experience into the text on which he was currently working (see chapter 6).

### 2.2.1 Works by Bergson

Szentkuthy's library includes four books by Henri Bergson that Szentkuthy read during his work on *Prae*. Each one is dated at the end. The dates in the books may refer to the day Szentkuthy began reading a book, finished it, or note that he was in the middle of reading it. The books show marks of heavy reading: underlined passages, circled words or page numbers, passages marked in the margins with vertical lines, marginalia, summarizing numbers, references to other pages or to other works, often to Proust (see Appendix 3, image 6). The material is analyzed in more detail in section 6.2. The books include the following:

- Henri Bergson, *Les deux sources de la morale et de la religion*, 8<sup>th</sup> ed. (Paris: Félix Alcan, 1934). On the first page Szentkuthy wrote in ballpoint pen: "1932 – 1964" which indicates that he first read the book in 1932 and reread it in 1964. On the last page he wrote in pencil: "1932 május vége – jun. 2." ("End of May 1932 – 2 June"), indicating the date he first finished reading the book.
- Henri Bergson, *Essai sur les données immédiates de la conscience*, 26<sup>th</sup> ed. (Paris: Félix Alcan, 1929). On the last page Szentkuthy wrote in pencil: "1932 június 25–26. (Kossuth-tér, Gröbel penzió)" ("25–26 June 1932 (Kossuth square, Gröbel Hostel)").<sup>184</sup>

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<sup>182</sup> De Biasi, "Qu'est-ce qu'un brouillon?," 47–48.

<sup>183</sup> For more information on Szentkuthy's library, see the photo album: Parragi, *Szentkuthy Miklós könyvtára*.

<sup>184</sup> Szentkuthy and Dolly stayed at the Gröbel hostel after their return from England in 1932 and before they moved to their own apartment at Derék Street.

- Henri Bergson, *Matière et mémoire: Essai sur la relation du corps à l'esprit*, 24<sup>th</sup> ed. (Paris: Félix Alcan, 1928). On the last page Szentkuthy wrote in pencil: “Bpest 1932 június 25-29. (Kossuth-tér – Gröbel-penzió; június 29. Margitsziget)” (“Budapest 25–29 June 1932 (Kossuth square – Gröbel Hostel; June 29 Margaret Island)”) (see Appendix 3, image 6).<sup>185</sup>
- Henri Bergson, *L'évolution créatrice*, 38<sup>th</sup> ed. (Paris: Félix Alcan, 1932). On the last page Szentkuthy wrote in pencil: “Bpest 1932 július 1–5. (Kossuth Lajos-tér Gröbel-penzió és Margitsziget)” (“Budapest 1–5 July 1932 (Kossuth square, Gröbel Hostel and Margaret Island)”).

Szentkuthy's library also includes other works which might have influenced *Prae* but which do not contain any noticeable reading marks. They remain hypothetical exogenetical sources:

- Henri Bergson, *Le Rire*, 36<sup>th</sup> ed. (Paris: Félix Alcan, 1931).
- René Gillouin, *Henri Bergson filozófiája* (Henri Bergson's philosophy), 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., trans. Zoltán Farkas (Budapest: Franklin-Társulat 1920).

## 2.2.2 Works by German Philosophers

Szentkuthy's library includes many philosophical books written by German authors. I gather them under the collective name of German philosophers. Section 6.4 analyzes Heidegger's and Husserl's impact on *Prae*, whereas section 5.3 discusses Heidegger's and Przywara's presence in an addition from 1933. Kant's influence is limited to an insignificant mention and for this reason it is not analyzed in this thesis.<sup>186</sup> The books include the following:

- Martin Heidegger, *Sein und Zeit: Erste Hälfte*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Halle a. d. S.: Max Niemeyer, 1931). On the first blank page, Szentkuthy wrote in black pen: “\* Szentkuthy-Pfisterer \* 1933–1966 (márc. 10.) (Olvastam Naphegy, Derék-u. 21., a kertben, földszintes lakásom, – szétbombázták, – nagyablaka alatt, tüdővész Szecs-kár ház-mester székén) \*” (“\* Szentkuthy-Pfisterer \* 1933–1966 (10 March) (I read it on Naphegy Hill, Derék Street 21,<sup>187</sup> in the garden, under the big window of my ground floor flat – bombed out – on the chair of the tubercular caretaker Szecs-kár)”). On the title page, Szentkuthy wrote in black ink: “Pfisterer Miklós”; then in blue pen: “1933–1964 VIII. 26.”; then again in black ink: “1966 III. 10. (l. Simone de Beauvoir, “A Kor Hatalma” 329).

<sup>185</sup> Margaret Island, known for its leisure facilities, is an island on the Danube in the center of Budapest.

<sup>186</sup> *P II*, 496–97. See also short mention about Kant in *FH*, 283.

<sup>187</sup> Szentkuthy and Dolly lived on Derék Street (in Buda) between 1932 and 1945.

oldal)” (“10 March 1966 (Cf Simone de Beauvoir, “The Prime of Life” page 329)”<sup>188</sup>). The books show marks of reading: underlined passages (see Appendix 3, image 7), marginalia, and vertical lines marking whole paragraphs.

- Edmund Husserl, *Ideen zu einer reinen Phänomenologie und phänomenologischen Philosophie: Erstes Buch; Allgemeine Einführung in die reine Phänomenologie*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Halle a. d. S.: Verlag von Max Niemeyer, 1928). The book is not dated by Szentkuthy. The whole book has 323 pages. It contains underlined passages and marginal notes only to page 31, after which there are no signs of reading.
- Immanuel Kant, *Kritik der Urteilskraft* (Leipzig: Verlag von Philipp Reclam jun., 1930). The whole book has 458 pages. In the book there are underlined passages and marginal notes, but only to page 128.
- Erich Przywara, *Analógia Entis: Metaphysik; I Prinzip* (München: Verlag Josef Kösel & Friedrich Pustet, 1932). On the first page Szentkuthy wrote: “\* Szentkuthy-Pfisterer 1932 → 1970 IX. 29. Szent Mihály \*” (“\* Szentkuthy-Pfisterer 1932 → 1970 IX. 29. Saint Michael \*”). On the second page, he signed in green ink: “Pfisterer Miklós.” The book contains underlined passages and marginalia.

### 2.2.3 Physics Books

Szentkuthy’s library includes numerous books on physics. The books show traces of reading: underlined passages, marks, and marginalia (see Appendix 3, image 8). The material is analyzed in 6.3. The books include the following:

- Arthur Eddington, *The Expanding Universe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1933). On the final page, Szentkuthy wrote: “1933 aug. 12. Basaharcz d.u. dunai balkon” (“12 August 1933 Basaharc<sup>189</sup> afternoon Danube balcony”).
- A.S. Eddington, *The Nature of the Physical World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1933). On the last page, Szentkuthy wrote in black ink: “1933 július 16–22. (I Enyedi u. 11a) I. 1)” (“16–22 July 1933 (I Enyedi street 11a) I. 1”).<sup>190</sup>

<sup>188</sup> Simone de Beauvoir’s book can be found in Szentkuthy’s library: Simone de Beauvoir, *A kor hatalma*, trans. Pál Réz (Budapest: Magvető, 1965). On page 329, where de Beauvoir mentions Sartre studying Heidegger’s works, Szentkuthy wrote on the margin “Naphegy hill around 1933 I read my own (EXPENSIVE) copy” (“Naphegy 1933 körül én olvastam, saját (DRÁGA) példányomat”).

<sup>189</sup> Basaharc (in older spelling “Basaharcz”) is a small village by the Danube, located north of Budapest near Esztergom. Dolly’s family had a summer villa there.

<sup>190</sup> Enyedi Street was Szentkuthy’s parents’ address.



- Albert Einstein, *On the Method of Theoretical Physics* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1933). On the cover, Szentkuthy wrote in ballpoint pen: “1933 VII. 18. – 1983 IX. 17.” On the final page, he wrote in black ink: “1933 július 18. kedd d.e. 9 – ½ 10. ó. 75-ös villamoson (Dolly Basaharczra; én Szüleimhez.)” (“18 July 1933 Tuesday 9–9.30 AM on the 75 tram (Dolly to Basaharc; I to my Parents’”).
- James Jeans, *The Mysterious Universe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1933). On the final page, Szentkuthy wrote in black ink: “1933 július 14–15.” (“14–15 July 1933”) (see Appendix 3, image 8).
- James Jeans, *The New Background of Science* (Cambridge at the University Press, 1933).
- John Macmurray, *Interpreting the Universe* (London: Faber and Faber, 1933). On the final page, Szentkuthy wrote “1933 július 10–11.” (“10–11 July 1933”).
- Arthur March, *Moderne Atomphysik: Eine allgemein verständliche Einführung* (Leipzig: Johann Ambrosius Barth, 1933). On the cover, Szentkuthy wrote “Pfisterer” in black ink, then in ballpoint pen: “1933 VIII 1. → 1983 IX 17.” On the final page he wrote “1933 aug. 1.”
- Philipp Frank, *Das Kausalgesetz und seine Grenzen* (Wien: Verlag von Julius Springer, 1932). On the cover, Szentkuthy wrote in ballpoint pen: “1932 XII. 12 – 23 → 1983 IX. 17.”

Finally, we should mention the French series of booklets *Actualités scientifiques et industrielles*, which Szentkuthy bought in August of 1933 in Geneva. Unless otherwise indicated, on the cover of each book, Szentkuthy wrote: “Genf 1935(6) előkészítve Szentkuthy-Pfisterer” (“Geneva 1935(6) prepared Szentkuthy-Pfisterer”). “Prepared” refers to the 1983 interview with Lóránt Kabdebó, which later appeared as *Frivolities and Confessions*. In the interview, Szentkuthy recalls buying “studies by de Broglie and other modern physicists” during his stay at a summer school in Geneva.<sup>191</sup> The summer school took place in 1933 (see 3.7) but Szentkuthy misdates the books “1935(6).”<sup>192</sup> I list here all of the books of the series, although they remain only hypothetical sources. Since only Émile Meyerson’s study is dated, and only there can we find reading marks, it is possible that Szentkuthy never read the other booklets. What confirms this hypothesis is the fact that the influence of physics is limited mostly to the first copybook of *Prae*, which Szentkuthy corrected and completed in the period preceding the summer school (see 6.3).

<sup>191</sup> “De Broglie és más modern fizikusok tanulmányai.” *FH*, 385. See also *ÉF*, 82.

<sup>192</sup> *FH*, 381, 382.

- E. Bauer, *Cinématique de la relativité* (Paris: Hermann, 1932).
- L. Brillouin, *Notions de mécanique ondulatoire. Les méthodes d'approximation* (Paris: Hermann, 1932).
- Louis de Broglie, *Conséquences de la relativité dans le développement de la mécanique ondulatoire* (Paris: Hermann, 1932).
- Louis de Broglie, *Sur une forme plus restrictive des relations d'incertitude: D'après MM. Landau et Peierls* (Paris: Hermann, 1932).<sup>193</sup>
- André George, *Mécanique quantique et causalité. D'après M. Fermi* (Paris: Hermann, 1932).
- Émile Meyerson, *Réel et déterminisme dans la physique quantique* (Paris: Hermann, 1933). On the first page Szentkuthy wrote: "Genève 1933 aug. 26." The booklet contains reading traces: underlined passages and marginalia.
- Paul Langevin, *La relativité: Conclusion générale* (Paris: Hermann, 1932). On the cover, Szentkuthy wrote: "1935(6) → 1981 IV. 28. Pardaviné Horváth Márta fizikussal ELŐKÉSZÍTVE (GENF)" ("1935(6) → 1981 IV. 28. PREPARED (GENEVA) with the physicist Márta Horváth Pardaviné").
- Francis Perrin, *La dynamique relativiste et l'inertie de l'énergie* (Paris: Hermann, 1932).
- Sainte-Laguë, *Probabilités et morphologie* (Paris: Hermann, 1932).
- *Conférences d'actualités scientifiques et industrielles*, préface de M. J. Lemoine (Paris: Hermann, 1930). On the cover, Szentkuthy wrote in ballpoint pen: "1935 → 1981 IV. 28. ELŐKÉSZÍTVE" ("1935 → 1981 IV. 28. PREPARED").

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<sup>193</sup> Szentkuthy mentions de Broglie's study in *FH*, 320.

## 2.3 Endogenetic Material

### 2.3.1 Manuscript

The manuscript of *Prae* can be found in the archives of PIM in two dossiers. The first dossier (PIM V. 5498/22/I) contains two checkered copybooks (19.5 x 24.2 cm). The copybooks comprise part 1 of *Prae* (chapters 1–8). The first copybook ends in the middle of the dialogue between Ena and the Norwegian doctor in chapter 5. An example of a folio from the first copybook can be seen in Appendix 3 (image 1). The second copybook begins with the words: “Ena lábán teveször paplan volt” (“Ena’s legs were covered by a camel hair quilt”)<sup>194</sup> and continues until the end of chapter 8. Since in the second copybook PIM’s numbering of the folios begins from one, in order to distinguish between them, the PIM numeration will be completed with an additional number, 1 or 2. Hence, PIM V. 5498/22/I/1 refers to the first copybook, while PIM V. 5498/22/I/2—to the second one. The number of a folio comes after the number of the copybook. The second dossier (PIM V. 5498/22/II) contains unbound oblong sheets (20.7 x 33.8 cm). It comprises parts 2 and 3 of *Prae* (chapters 9–14). The numbering of the folios starts at the beginning of Halbert’s father’s diary. Thus, the order is reversed: first comes chapter 14 (folios 1–180), then chapters 9–13 (folios 181–438). The copybooks include, respectively, 263 and 148 folios. The oblong sheets have in sum 438 folios. The whole manuscript counts to as many as 849 folios. In both dossiers the folios are numbered according to two different systems: Szentkuthy’s (colored crayon) and the official numbering of PIM (pencil). This thesis refers to the PIM system, unless otherwise stated.

The manuscript—both the copybooks and the oblong sheets—contains in sum more than one hundred additions. Additions are usually written on small sheets of paper (circa 16.9 x 20.7 cm) that are attached to the manuscript with a colored paperclip. For an example of an addition, see Appendix 3, image 2. The small sheets are exactly half of the oblong pages, which suggests that Szentkuthy made the small sheets by cutting an oblong sheet in two. The place of an addition is marked in the manuscript with a graphic sign (mostly red or blue circles, squares, or rectangles), which is then repeated at the beginning of the addition (see Appendix 3, images 1 and 2: the place of the addition in the copybook is marked by a grey circle with a cross that is repeated at the top of the addition). The length of each addition varies. The shortest one (no. 67) consists of only one sentence written on a scrap of paper, while the longest one (no. 56) numbers to over 50 pages. The full list of additions is given in the Appendix. There are also numerous additions to the margins. Also, in such cases, the place of an addition is marked with a sign that is repeated in the margin. There are also additions that are written between the lines.

In the copybooks, Szentkuthy originally wrote only on the rectos, however, later, when he revised and expanded the text, he used the versos for writing. Chapter 1, *Touqué’s monologue*, and the *Veronica and Ulva episode*, are written on the versos. In the oblong sheets and

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<sup>194</sup> *PI*, 386.

additions, Szentkuthy wrote mainly on the recto. Sometimes on the verso we can find a comment of Szentkuthy's, or dating.

Both the copybooks and the sheets contain numerous corrections. A word, a sentence, or a longer passage may be either totally covered with ink or only crossed out. Sometimes what is crossed out is replaced by a new version. The corrections appear with varying frequency: in the additions there is hardly any correction, whereas in chapter 8 sometimes up to half of a page is crossed out (see Appendix 3; compare image 1, the corrected page of the copybook, versus image 2, where we can almost clearly see the text of the addition).

Much of *Prae* is written in black ink, but occasionally Szentkuthy uses blue ink too. For instance, the whole of part 3 is corrected with blue ink, and the additions to it are also written in blue. There are almost no indentations in the text of the manuscript, no spaces between the lines, and no place in the margins. Each page of the manuscript is thus entirely filled. Since there was no typescript of *Prae*, the manuscript also contains guidelines for the typesetters. They concern, for instance, the usage of italics, the place of the additions, and indentations.

### 2.3.1.1 Copybooks

The copybooks include fragments written in three different periods. 1) The rectos of the copybooks were written between March of 1931 and early 1932; 2) three parts, which I have named *Touqué's monologue* (addition 4; *P I*, 79–241), the *Veronica and Ulva episode* (addition 40; *P I*, 405–53), and the *Antipsyché Idylls* (addition 14; *P I*, 177–235) were written around the summer of 1932. Both *Touqué's monologue* and the *Veronica and Ulva episode* were written on the versos of the copybook; 3) the additions to the copybooks were written between May of 1933 and February of 1934 (see 2.3.1.3).

It is usually assumed that Szentkuthy began to write *Prae* in the autumn of 1928.<sup>195</sup> However, evidence indicates that the rectos of the copybooks were written from around March of 1931 to early 1932. Szentkuthy often declared that he began to work on *Prae* in 1928 after returning from the Grand Tour.<sup>196</sup> We should however distinguish between the initialization of a project and the beginning of the textualization process. In other words, Szentkuthy might well have begun to work on *Prae* in 1928, but he did not start to fill the copybooks until early 1931.

Take into consideration the fact that Szentkuthy himself is uncertain about the date. It is true that in *Frivolities and Confessions* he declared 1928 as the starting date of his work on *Prae*. However, elsewhere he gave contradictory statements. For instance, in a 1976 memoir, "Prae: Recollections of My Career," he says that *Prae* was written between 1931 and 1933,<sup>197</sup>

<sup>195</sup> See for instance Szentkuthy's biography: Hegyi, *Szentkuthy Miklós*, 32, 128.

<sup>196</sup> *FH*, 327, 319; Miklós Szentkuthy, "Program egy elképzelt Joyce-szemináriumhoz" [Program for an imagined Joyce seminar] *Jelenkor* 54, no. 7–8 (July–August, 2011): 743.

<sup>197</sup> *ÉF*, 51; Miklós Szentkuthy, "Prae: Recollections of My Career," trans. Tim Wilkinson, *Hyperion: On the Future of Aesthetics* 7, no. 2 (18 July 2013): 56, accessed 25 October 2013, [http://www.contramundum.net/Hyperion/Documents/1.5-SzM-Prae\\_My\\_Career.pdf](http://www.contramundum.net/Hyperion/Documents/1.5-SzM-Prae_My_Career.pdf). Citations refer both to the original and the translation.

while in the interview given after the publication of *Prae*, he says that he worked on the novel for three years.<sup>198</sup> We could duly ask, which ones: 1928–31 or 1931–33? Another argument for the 1931 hypothesis is the mention of a fictional book at the beginning of the first copybook: “*Kultur-attitude und sogenannte Reine Vernunft*, übersetzt von Richard T. Klingel, Bonn, 1931.”<sup>199</sup> When in 1933 Szentkuthy invented more such references, three of them were dated 1933 (see 6.4), which indicates that he did not postdate the books of his fictional bibliography. The year 1931 of Klingel’s book could thus be interpreted as the year when the first copybook was written.

However, the main argument for the 1931 hypothesis is to be found in the drafts from the early diary published as *The Play of Pains and Secrets* (*Fájdalmak és titkok játéka*). What the drafts clearly show is that the story of the Norwegian sanatorium was not conceived until the beginning of 1931. The same story is already mentioned in its fully developed form at the beginning of the first copybook, which means that Szentkuthy could not have begun to fill the copybooks before 1931.

Let us first analyze the story in the printed text. When Halbert and Anny reach *Perspective*, there, they meet Touqué, Leatrice, and her friend, Ena. A long description of Leatrice and Touqué’s and Halbert’s dialogue on the balcony is followed by description of Ena.<sup>200</sup> One of the most important episodes of her life, we are told, was her sojourn to Norway. Originally she went there to study law. Yet, during her scholarship, she fell ill, underwent an operation, and had to recover in a famous sanatorium for women run by Gerda Staalbreck. The idea of the sanatorium was not only to provide physical treatment, but also to promulgate feminist ideology, a cult of the female body and lesbian love. The story of the sanatorium is then described in more detail in chapter 5, when Ena recalls her trip to Norway.<sup>201</sup> The clinic was established by Gerda Staalbreck, a Norwegian woman who married a German doctor and moved to Berlin. When Gerda’s husband died, she came back to Norway with her late husband’s female assistant. In Norway, Gerda and the assistant became lovers. Influenced by the new ideas that she learnt from the assistant, Gerda established the sanatorium, where some years later Ena was recovering from her illness.

Let us now examine the drafts to the Norway episode. The first, still very vague mention of the sanatorium theme is dated 10 November 1930. At that time, the draft is still not a part of the novel; it figures in a plan of a series of twelve essays that Szentkuthy calls *Abouts and Brackets*.<sup>202</sup> The tenth essay, entitled *Les Mésalliances de Psyché*, briefly mentions a “hypersexual lesbian girl from Berlin,”<sup>203</sup> whereas the eleventh essay mentions an “ultramodern clinic.”<sup>204</sup> We can recognize here elements from the sanatorium episode, which are, however, only vaguely sketched. In another draft, dated 27 February 1931, Szentkuthy

<sup>198</sup> *ÉF*, 9.

<sup>199</sup> *PI*, 287; PIM V. 5498/22/I/1, fol. 96r.

<sup>200</sup> *PI*, 72–75.

<sup>201</sup> *PI*, 366–94.

<sup>202</sup> *FTJ*, 67–69.

<sup>203</sup> “Hiperszexuális leszbikus berlini lány.” *FTJ*, 69.

<sup>204</sup> “Ultra-modern klinika.” *FTJ*, 69.

develops the material from *Les mésalliances de Psyché*.<sup>205</sup> A woman named Annette gives birth to a handicapped child and leaves the baby in a tower of the Reims cathedral.<sup>206</sup> A friend of hers, a Swedish female doctor, takes her to a sanatorium in Sweden by the seaside, where they become lovers. Again we can observe the elements known from *Prae*: sanatorium in Scandinavia by the seaside and lesbian sex between the heroine and the doctor. What the draft also mentions is “Swedish sunshine,” which later appears in Ena’s dialogue with Leatrice.<sup>207</sup> However, all of these elements are still in a very preliminary stage. The heroine is called Annette, which is phonetically close to Ena, but Ena’s name is not mentioned. The sanatorium is in Sweden, and not, as in the final version, in Norway<sup>208</sup> (interestingly, in a dialogue with Leatrice, Ena once mentions her sojourn to Sweden, which is probably Szentkuthy’s oversight, a trace of the previous version).<sup>209</sup> Also, the story itself—leaving the child in the cathedral and going to Sweden—is very different from the final version. All this points to the fact that, still in February of 1931, Ena’s story was highly sketchy. Since the final version of the story is fully presented already at the beginning of the first copybook, the textualization of the copybook must have begun after February 1931. When exactly? Szentkuthy states that he wrote *Prae* simultaneously with his doctoral dissertation.<sup>210</sup> If we are to believe his recollection, we could assume that he must have begun to write *Prae* before mid-March, since the dissertation was accepted on 13 March 1931. Let us then roughly date the beginning of textualization to March of 1931.

Two pieces of evidence show that Szentkuthy worked with the copybooks throughout the summer: a letter to Mária Hercz dated 13 June 1931 where Szentkuthy reports on his work,<sup>211</sup> and a note on the verso of addition 12 (see Appendix 2), which mentions that some parts of *Prae* were written in San Martino (Italy), where Szentkuthy, Dolly, and Dolly’s mother, spent the summer of 1931 (see 3.3).

The question remains when the textualization of the copybooks ended. One piece of evidence suggests that Szentkuthy continued to write in the copybooks when he was still in England. In a diary entry from 19 January 1934, Dolly notes that Szentkuthy is working on the correction of the “London text” from two years ago, that is, from early 1932.<sup>212</sup> The stamps on the proofs show clearly that, by January 1934, the first copybook was already printed, so were parts 2 and 3 of *Prae* (see 2.3.4). The only part still not in print, in other words, the only part that Szentkuthy could have corrected at that time, was the second copybook. Thus, it must be the second copybook, which Dolly refers to as the “London text” from early 1932. The question remains, of course, which part of the second copybook was written in Budapest, and which part in London, when Szentkuthy resumed the work on *Prae*. Unfortunately, there is no evidence that can help us answer this question. A purely hypothetical guess would be that it is the final vision of part 1 (chapter 8) that was written in

<sup>205</sup> *FTJ*, 84–85, 86.

<sup>206</sup> Reims is mentioned in *PI*, 363–64.

<sup>207</sup> *FTJ*, 85; *PI*, 358.

<sup>208</sup> *PI*, 73–74, 366.

<sup>209</sup> *PI*, 358.

<sup>210</sup> *ÉF*, 51; Szentkuthy, “*Prae*: Recollections of My Career,” 56.

<sup>211</sup> Szentkuthy to Mária Hercz, 13 June 1931.

<sup>212</sup> Dolly’s diary, 19 January 1934.

London. The vision differs from the preceding text. It has a strongly surrealist character that contrasts with the preceding text's basically realist character. The difference between these two parts might be a reflection of the break between the Budapest and the London period (see 3.4).

Three larger parts of the copybooks—*Touqué's monologue*, the *Antipsyché Idylls*, and the *Veronica and Ulva episode*—were written after the period of March 1931 to early 1932.

*Touqué's monologue* (chapters 2 and 3) is written on the versos of the first copybook. The monologue interrupts a scene in which Touqué is watching Leatrice. It expands the theme of desire that Touqué feels towards Leatrice. The complementary character of the monologue, as well as the strong presence of the Riviera theme, suggest that Szentkuthy must have written it after finishing the copybooks, and after his sojourn to Southern France in April of 1932. On the other hand, since an addition to the monologue *Antipsyché Idylls* was written around June–July 1932, the monologue must have been written before June of 1932. *Touqué's monologue* could then be dated to around May–June of 1932.

*Antipsyché Idylls* is an addition to *Touqué's monologue* written on small sheets of paper. On their versos Szentkuthy noted several times that the addition was written in the summer of 1932 (see Appendix 2, notes in addition 14). The general idea of the *Antipsyché Idylls* was sketched at the beginning of June.<sup>213</sup> The first half of the addition was sketched between 2 and 28 June.<sup>214</sup> The addition can thus be dated to around July of 1932.

The *Veronica and Ulva episode* is written on the verso of the second copybook. Four pieces of evidence suggest that it was written between the spring and autumn of 1932. Firstly, the presence of Riviera thematics (as in *Touqué's monologue*) suggests that the episode must have been written after Szentkuthy's sojourn to Southern France in April of 1932. Secondly, one passage mentions a meeting that will take place on 22 April, which is the day that Szentkuthy returned from his honeymoon to Budapest.<sup>215</sup> Perhaps he had a meeting with somebody on that day? If the 22 of April indeed refers to that day of return, the episode must have been written after Szentkuthy's return to Budapest (on the 16<sup>th</sup> of April, Szentkuthy was still not sure about the precise date of the return).<sup>216</sup> Thirdly, there are numerous thematic parallels between the *Veronica and Ulva episode* and the *Tilia Parvifolia episode*, of which we know that it was written around summer–autumn of 1932 (see 2.3.1.2). Both episodes include: 1) new characters, all of whom are women named after plants. In the *Veronica and Ulva episode*, they are Veronica Chamaedrys, Ulva di Chara, and Nigella, whereas in *Tilia Parvifolia episode*, they are Tilia Parvifolia and Ajuga és Potentilla;<sup>217</sup> 2) references to geography, perhaps of autobiographical origin (beginning in autumn of 1932, Szentkuthy

<sup>213</sup> *FTJ*, 103.

<sup>214</sup> *FTJ*, 103. See the dates in *FTJ*, 101 and *FTJ*, 107.

<sup>215</sup> *P I*, 442.

<sup>216</sup> Szentkuthy to Lajos Pfisterer, postcard, 16 April 1932.

<sup>217</sup> Veronica Chamaedrys is bird's-eye speedwell. Both Ulva and Chara are green algae (of course, Ulva is also an allusion to vulva). Tilia Parvifolia is small leaved lime, Ajuga—Bugleweed, Potentilla—Cinquefoil. In the April 1932 issue of *Vogue* (Szentkuthy's library) there is an article presenting parallels between women's clothes and mushroom shapes. The illustrations include clothes, corresponding mushrooms, and Latin names. It is possible that this article may have influenced Szentkuthy to name his new heroines after plants.

taught geography in Madách High School);<sup>218</sup> 3) the idea of the connection between words, objects, and body parts;<sup>219</sup> 4) the motif of “*Adam Nudus*.”<sup>220</sup> These thematic similarities might indicate that *Veronica* was written in parallel to *Tilia*, that is, around summer–autumn of 1932. Fourthly, Leatrice’s uncle, who in the first copybook was originally named Félix, in part 2 (at least partially written in London) already appears as Péter.<sup>221</sup> Later, probably during the final revision of the copybooks, Szentkuthy everywhere replaced Félix with Péter.<sup>222</sup> In the *Veronica and Ulva episode*, Leatrice’s uncle already appears as Péter, which suggests that the episode was written after he finished the copybooks.<sup>223</sup> Furthermore, one motif from part 2 also appears in the *Veronica episode*. In chapter 12, there is a scene when Péter is waiting for a ferry because he is going to visit his lover. It is cold, raining, and Péter is described as hypochondriac:

Péter was sitting at the shore on a bench and waited for the ferryman to take him. It was very cold and he coughed a lot. (...) Poor Péter was a hypochondriac, who, when a small wind blew, immediately put a handkerchief to his mouth, and when he drank fresh wine, he felt for weeks the taste of cork in his stomach—how must he have frozen on that bench.<sup>224</sup>

In the *Veronica episode*, there is a very similar motif that could be a reference to the abovementioned scene: “Péter’s flu-loves came to her [Leatrice’s] mind: the bench is wet, rain is dropping from the branches, the lovers blow their noses and fill huge handkerchiefs in a moment (...)”<sup>225</sup> A reference to the scene from part 2, suggesting that it had already been written, as well as the usage of the name Péter instead of Félix, indicate that the *Veronica episode* must have been written after the copybooks were finished.

<sup>218</sup> *P I*, 423, 438; *P II*, 284, 292, 294, 295; *FH* 354.

<sup>219</sup> *P I*, 424, 426; *P II*, 293–94.

<sup>220</sup> *P I*, 427–28; *P II*, 296.

<sup>221</sup> For instance, PIM V. 5498/22/II, fol. 339r; *P II*, 181.

<sup>222</sup> For instance, PIM V. 5498/22/I/1, fol. 210r; *P I*, 328.

<sup>223</sup> PIM V. 5498/22/I/2, fol. 19v; *P I*, 410.

<sup>224</sup> “Péter a part mellett ült egy padon, és várta a csónakos parasztot, aki átvigye. Nagyon hideg volt, úgyhogy erősen köhögött. (...) Szegény Péter nagy hipochonder volt, aki, ha kis szél fújt, rögtön zsebkendőjét tartott a szája elé, s ha friss bort ivott, hetekig érezte a parafizt a gyomrában – hogy fázhatott ott a padon.” *P II*, 182.

<sup>225</sup> “Péter influenza-szerelmei jutottak eszébe: a pad vizes, az ágakról csöpög az eső, a szerelmesek óriási zsebkendőket pillanatok alatt telefüjnek (...)” *P I*, 410.



### 2.3.1.2 Oblong Sheets

The oblong sheets can be divided into three portions: part 3 (folios 1–180) and part 2 (folios 181–432) of *Prae*, as well as additions to both of them, which are dealt with in the subsequent section (2.3.1.3). The first portion (Halbert's father's diary) is dated by Szentkuthy himself. On the verso of the diary, Szentkuthy made a note according to which he wrote the diary from 23 December 1932 until 1 May 1933:

I wrote the diary of the Exeter parson pages 1–100 from 23 December 1932 until 1 May 1933. I wrote the final pages without inspiration, mechanically, among bad physical conditions, headaches, hopelessness and inexpressible depression: the whole thing was aimless struggle. 1 May 1933. Miklós Pfisterer.<sup>226</sup>

What confirms this dating is the mention of Christmas at the beginning of the diary,<sup>227</sup> then a note on a verso about Hitler becoming chancellor ("31 January 1933 = Today Hitler became chancellor, or rather today the news came in the morning paper")<sup>228</sup> and finally mention of "April the thirtieth" on the final pages of the diary.<sup>229</sup>

The second portion (part 2 of *Prae*) is difficult to date. A very rough guess would be to date the text between late 1931 and autumn 1932. The text contains a memory of a performance of *Intrigue and Love*, which Szentkuthy saw on his journey to England, which implies that it was written after he left Budapest in October 1931.<sup>230</sup> Also, Leatrice's meditation on the ships in the Hamburg harbor can be interpreted as Szentkuthy's memories of Hamburg.<sup>231</sup> Furthermore, throughout the text of part 2, we can find numerous English words or references to English culture, which imply that Szentkuthy wrote, or at least sketched, this part in London. The text includes references to Blake,<sup>232</sup> Milton,<sup>233</sup> and English place names, such as Bournemouth<sup>234</sup> and "English countryside castle."<sup>235</sup> The character of the Englishman Halbert is more prominent than in the copybooks where Leville-Touqué the Frenchman dominates. There are many English words in the original, mostly coming from Halbert's mouth: "faint dose,"<sup>236</sup> "old chap,"<sup>237</sup> "motives of cleanliness... transcendental... german...",<sup>238</sup> "I am afloat,"<sup>239</sup> "glove-patting,"<sup>240</sup> "hyper-exactitudes of Nonentities."<sup>241</sup> Also,

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<sup>226</sup> "Az exeteri pap naplóját írtam 1–100 oldalig 1932 december 23-től 1933 május 1-ig a legutolsó oldalakat ihlet nélkül, gépiesen, fizikai rosszul-érzés, fejfájás, reménytelenség és kimondhatatlan levertség közepette írtam: céltalan vergődés volt az egész. 1933 május 1. Pfisterer Miklós." PIM V. 5498/22/II, fol. 170v.

<sup>227</sup> *P II*, 323, 345.

<sup>228</sup> "1933 január 31. n. = Hitler ma lett kancellár, ill. ma jött híre a reggeli újságban." PIM V. 5498/22/II, fol. 64v; *P II*, 387–89.

<sup>229</sup> "Április harmincadikán." *P II*, 564.

<sup>230</sup> *P II*, 130–32; *FH*, 102–3.

<sup>231</sup> *P II*, 121–22. See 3.4.

<sup>232</sup> *P II*, 132, 219, 237.

<sup>233</sup> *P II*, 199, 239.

<sup>234</sup> *P II*, 103.

<sup>235</sup> "Vidéki angol várkastély." *P II*, 116.

<sup>236</sup> *P II*, 98.

<sup>237</sup> *P II*, 98.

<sup>238</sup> *P II*, 100. "German" is in lower case.

<sup>239</sup> *P II*, 102.

<sup>240</sup> *P II*, 103.

the narrator uses many English words: “settled,”<sup>242</sup> “dream-proof,”<sup>243</sup> “There Israel in bondage to his Generalizing Gods,”<sup>244</sup> “The pale limbs of his Eternal Individuality,”<sup>245</sup> “style Nature XIV,”<sup>246</sup> “Act of Westminster,”<sup>247</sup> “can’t be carried in every position.”<sup>248</sup> It is therefore possible that Szentkuthy began to write part 2 in London. When he says he wrote in England “about one third of *Prae*,”<sup>249</sup> he might refer to this particular text. However, it should be noted that the end of part 2 (*Tilia Parvifolia episode*) was already written in Budapest. Four pieces of evidence point to that: firstly, the *Tilia episode* includes a description of an armchair on which—according to *Frivolities and Confessions*—Szentkuthy sat during a job interview.<sup>250</sup> The interview took place after his return to Budapest, which means that, at that time, part 2 was still not ready. Secondly, *The Play of Pains and Secrets* contains one sketchy draft of the final part of the *Tilia episode*. The draft is dated 2 June 1932. At that time, Szentkuthy was already back in Budapest.<sup>251</sup> Thirdly, the way Szentkuthy refers to the *Antipsyché Idylls* in the *Tilia episode* suggests that they were already written: “Just as one can write *Antipsyché Idylls*, one can also write *Antipsyché Atlas*.”<sup>252</sup> Since the *Antipsyché Idylls* were written around July 1932, the *Tilia episode* must have been written in late summer or autumn of 1932. Fourthly, Szentkuthy himself says that he was still writing his novel in autumn of 1932: “I was writing [*Prae*] still in 1932 when I began to teach in Barcsay Street Madách High School.”<sup>253</sup> To conclude, Szentkuthy probably started to write the second part after he left Budapest in October 1931 but did not finish it until autumn of 1932. Unfortunately, there is no evidence that would indicate how much of part 2 was actually written in London. Let us therefore establish a conjectural dating as late 1931–autumn of 1932.

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<sup>241</sup> *P II*, 184.

<sup>242</sup> *P II*, 193.

<sup>243</sup> *P II*, 224.

<sup>244</sup> *P II*, 234.

<sup>245</sup> *P II*, 234.

<sup>246</sup> *P II*, 245.

<sup>247</sup> *P II*, 246.

<sup>248</sup> *P II*, 276.

<sup>249</sup> *ÉF*, 83.

<sup>250</sup> *P II*, 285–86; *FH*, 342–44.

<sup>251</sup> *P II*, 302–4; *FTJ*, 101.

<sup>252</sup> “Ahogy meg lehet szerkeszteni az *Antipsyché Idilljei*-t, úgy meg lehet szerkeszteni az *Antipsyché Atlasz*-át is.” *P II*, 296.

<sup>253</sup> “Írtam [a *Prae*-t] még 1932-ben is, mikor elkezdtem tanítani a Barcsay utcai Madách-gimnáziumban.” *FH*, 319.

### 2.3.1.3 Corrections and Additions

The corrections and the additions to the manuscript of *Prae* can be dated from May of 1933 to February of 1934. During this final stage of *Prae*'s genesis, Szentkuthy simultaneously corrected the manuscript and enhanced it with additions. The stage can be further divided into four periods according to the part of the material that Szentkuthy was working on:

1. May–August of 1933 — the first copybook.
2. September–October of 1933 — oblong sheets (folios 1–180; part 3).
3. November–December of 1933 — oblong sheets (folios 181–438; part 2).
4. January–February of 1934 — the second copybook.

Obviously, this periodization does not concern three “early additions,” as I name them, that is, *Touqué's monologue*, the *Antipsyché Idylls*, and the *Ulva and Veronica episode*, which were written in spring–summer of 1932 (see 2.3.1.1). Let us now see the evidence on the base of which the aforementioned dating is proposed.

There are many indications that in the period May–August of 1933, Szentkuthy worked on the first copybook. First and foremost, some additions from the first copybook are dated on the verso (all notes on the versos are given in Appendix 2). Addition 23, which is about Venice tourist posters and which is attached to the middle of the first copybook, was written on 22 May 1933. Addition 30, which contains the theory about spatial form in the novel, was sketched on 7 June and written on 8 June. Addition 33, on Touqué's idea of nature, was written on 14 June and placed in the manuscript only several pages later after addition 30. Addition 12, on the illusion of the stability of the church wall, which is attached to the middle of *Touqué's monologue*, was written on 18 July. Addition 11 (*Third Non-Prae-diagonal*) is not dated but Szentkuthy must have written it in the first half of July. Szentkuthy sent the first page of the addition to the printing house in order to acquire a typesetting model (see 2.3.6), which he received on 18 July. The fact that he used text from the first copybook implies that it is the first copybook that he was working on at that time. As for corrections, on 29 and 31 July, Szentkuthy wrote comments on the versos of the *Antipsyché Idylls*, which indicates that at that time he was rereading and correcting this part. On 18 July, Szentkuthy wrote to Mária Hercz that he was correcting the part that he called “the tacktailed part” (*a fércfarkú rész*).<sup>254</sup> Which one does he refer to? The expression *fércfarkú* is rare and unusual. It appears in *Prae* only once. In one of his memories, Touqué recalls the fashion salon run by his mother. When describing the salon, Szentkuthy uses the phrase “tacktailed lining torsos” (*fércfarkú béléstorzók*) to describe a handbag, by which he probably means bag linings that are not yet sewed on, and from which threads are hanging like tails.<sup>255</sup> Perhaps, in Szentkuthy's and Hercz's language, the phrase served as a metonymy to designate the whole part where the fashion salon is described? This hypothesis is confirmed by the fact that the tacktailed linings are mentioned only some pages later after addition 12, of which we know that it was also

<sup>254</sup> Szentkuthy to Mária Hercz, 18 July 1933.

<sup>255</sup> *PI*, 160.

written on 18 July.<sup>256</sup> On 17 August, one hour before his departure to Geneva, Szentkuthy wrote to Hercz that he had left a big part of *Prae* at the printing house.<sup>257</sup> The “big part” must refer to the first copybook, since its proofs were already sent to Szentkuthy on 7 October 1933. Also, it seems logical to start the correction from the beginning and to give the printing house a portion of text with clear boundaries, such as one copybook.

Let us move now to the second period (September–October 1933), during which Szentkuthy corrected and expanded part 3 of *Prae*. Some additions from this period are dated on the versos (see notes in Appendix 2). Addition 91 is dated 20 September. Addition 97 is not dated but on the envelope of a letter from Dolly we can find a note: “attach irreal person (hysteria = great-infidelity =) in the middle of p. 45.”<sup>258</sup> The letter was written on 22 September, while the postmark is from 23 September. In the middle of page 45 (Szentkuthy’s numbering), there is indeed a sign marking an addition about infidelity.<sup>259</sup> Also, drafts to the additions show that, in September, Szentkuthy was working on Halbert’s father’s diary. Additions 78 and 80 are drafted on a page with dates 12 and 13 September. Additions 86 and 84 are drafted on the same folio with additions 97 and 91. Since addition 97 was attached after 23 September, and addition 91 around 20 September, additions 86 and 84 can also be dated to late September. Another convincing piece of evidence can be obtained from Szentkuthy’s correspondence with Dolly. On 16 September, Dolly asks how Szentkuthy is doing with his correction of the diary, by which she is probably referring to Halbert’s father’s diary.<sup>260</sup> On the same day, Szentkuthy wrote a comment on the verso side of page 15 (Szentkuthy’s numeration) of the diary that concerns the impossibility of describing the world with language. The comment says: “When I wrote this page I did not have a clue about Broglie’s and Einsteinian neo-Berkley mathem. idealism. 16 September 1933.”<sup>261</sup> The date implies that, on that day, Szentkuthy was rereading this page. The next note in the diary is on the verso of page 82 (Szentkuthy’s numeration). It is dated 4 October, which implies that, at that time, Szentkuthy was still working on the text.<sup>262</sup> Soon after that, he must have finished the correction (originally the diary numbered 110 pages), since the first portion of proofs of the diary already came on 24 October.

On the 30<sup>th</sup> of December, Szentkuthy got the proofs of part 2, which implies that he was correcting it between November and December 1933. The content of addition 56 (*Fifth Non-Prae-diagonal*) supports this hypothesis. The addition mentions the month of November,<sup>263</sup> “snowy parks” and “warm room,”<sup>264</sup> and the experience of teaching,<sup>265</sup> which might have been of autobiographic origin.

<sup>256</sup> In the manuscript the addition is attached do 114v, while the tacktailed torsos are mentioned on 119v.

<sup>257</sup> Szentkuthy to Mária Hercz, 17 August 1933.

<sup>258</sup> “betoldani irreális személyt (hisztéria = nagy-hütlenség = ) 45. old közepén.” Dolly to Szentkuthy, 22 September 1933.

<sup>259</sup> PIM V. 5498/22/II, fol. 87r.

<sup>260</sup> Dolly to Szentkuthy, 16 September 1933.

<sup>261</sup> “Mikor ezt a lapot írtam, még sejtelmem sem volt a Broglie, Einstein stb.-féle neo-berkeleyanus „matem. idealizmusról”. 1933 szept. 16.” PIM V. 5498/22/II, fol. 34v; *P II*, 344–46.

<sup>262</sup> PIM V. 5498/22/II, fol. 141v.

<sup>263</sup> *P II*, 135, 152.

<sup>264</sup> “Havas parkok,” “meleg szoba.” *P II*, 161.

<sup>265</sup> *P II*, 135, 145, 150, 165

The proofs of the second copybook came on the 17<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> of March 1934, which indicates that Szentkuthy corrected it around January–February of 1934. Addition 43, attached to the middle of the copybook, is dated 14–19 of February 1934. It is also worth noting that, in the second copybook, there are only six additions, which might indicate that the writer hastily finished the corrections.

### 2.3.2 Drafts

The drafts to *Prae* can be divided into three groups.

The first group includes eleven folios with drawings, diary notes, and drafts to the additions that Szentkuthy attached to the manuscript during his final writing stage. The folios are in dossier PIM V. 5498/23. Earlier, the dossier also included two folios with drafts to *Black Renaissance*. The folios were removed but the remaining folios retained their numbers. In effect, the eleven folios are numbered 3–13. Since the first folio is dated June of 1933, while the last one is dated October 1933, the drafts can be dated June–October 1933. The drafts containing plans for additions are listed in the table of additions in Appendix 2. This thesis analyzes some of the drafts in more detail. The draft to addition 5 (*Interpolation*) is analyzed in 5.3 (see also image 5 in Appendix 3), while drafts to addition 81 (*Juanus Ethicus*) are analyzed in 6.5.

The second group includes drafts to fragments from the *Antipsyché Idylls* (*P I*, 200–202), which are also in dossier PIM V. 5498/23. The drafts are written on a large sheet of paper that is folded in half twice, forming a booklet of four pages. The sheet is numbered as the first folio in the dossier. I will therefore refer to the drafts as PIM V. 5498/23/1, after which the number of the folio (1–4) will be given. Szentkuthy wrote the *Antipsyché Idylls* in the summer of 1932, hence the drafts can also be dated around the summer of 1932. The drafts are analyzed in more detail in 5.2 (see also images 3 and 4 in Appendix 3).

The third group includes the drafts from Szentkuthy's early diary, published as *The Play of Pains and Secrets* (*Fájdalmak és titkok játéka*). These drafts include:

1. A plan of “oïd-thinking,”<sup>266</sup> Halbert's poem about the sea,<sup>267</sup> and a plan for the continuation of the Hilde and Yvonne episode (*FTJ*, 28–29).
2. Drafts to fragments from the *Antipsyché Idylls* (*P I*, 176–99). They were published in *FTJ*, 99–107, but some parts are omitted in the transcription.
3. Drafts to the sanatorium story (*FTJ*, 69, 84–85).
4. A draft to the short story in *Tilia's episode* (*P II*, 301–4; *FTJ*, 101)
5. Scattered plans, references to, and notes about the novel.

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<sup>266</sup> *P I*, 360–62.

<sup>267</sup> *P I*, 461.

### 2.3.3 Unpublished Fragments

What is meant by this section title, unpublished fragments, is texts that were probably meant to be a part of *Prae* but for some reason were not included in the final version. I have found three such fragments: two descriptions of churches (each of them on one folio) and one longer passage about Touqué (five folios). The fragments can be found in dossier PIM V. 5498/43/II, entitled “Az alázat kalendárium” (The almanac of humility), in an envelope on which Szentkuthy wrote “hosszú-hosszú elmélkedések 1935 körül (“Metaforám” folytatása) Osváth Júlia portré is ebben” (long meditations around 1935 (continuation of my “Metaphor”) including Júlia Osváth’s portrait). I published them in the journal *Holmi*, where I also argued that, most probably, the fragments were supposed to be attached to *Prae* as additions.<sup>268</sup> My argument was based on the material and thematic similarity of the fragments and the additions. Like most of the additions, the fragments were written on small pieces of paper. Two fragments contain descriptions of churches, which was a common topic in the additions (see 4.3.1). The third fragment mentions Touqué, which leaves us no doubt that it was supposed to be a part of *Prae*.

### 2.3.4 Proofs

Only some parts of proofs of *Prae* have survived. They can be found in dossier PIM V. 5498/22. The pages are numbered in Szentkuthy’s hand. The proofs include Szentkuthy’s corrections (in red ink), his marginal notes, but also corrections and comments by Mária Hercz and Dolly.<sup>269</sup> The corrections concern mostly typesetter’s errors. There are many of them, since the typesetter had to set the text from the manuscript. Other corrections concern mainly foreign words that were changed into their Hungarian equivalents.

The material can be divided into five groups:

1. 110 folios with almost the entirety of part 3 (*P II*, 305–586; only the last folio is lacking). On the first folio, there is an official stamp according to which the proofs were sent to Szentkuthy on 24 October 1933. On folio 51 (*P II*, 434), there is a stamp with the date 27 October 1933. The proofs include two additions (nos. 100 and 102) attached on separate pieces of paper.<sup>270</sup>

2. 18 folios with almost the entirety of chapter 9 (*P II*, 7–53; the last folio is missing) with a stamp dated 30 December 1933.

3. 86 folios with the text of the second copybook (*P I*, 386–610), which came in two portions, on the 17<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> of March 1934. On the first folio, there is a stamp dated 17

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<sup>268</sup> Filip Sikorski, “Három ismeretlen *Prae*-részlet” [Three unknown fragments of “*Prae*”], *Holmi* 24, no. 10 (October 2012): 1246–59.

<sup>269</sup> In *Frivolities and Confessions*, Szentkuthy says that Mária Hercz helped him with the proofs. *FH*, 374. From Dolly’s diary, we know that she also helped Szentkuthy with the proofs (Dolly’s diary, 23 April 1934).

<sup>270</sup> Attaching additions to the proofs was a method typical of Balzac. Debray Genette, *Métamorphoses du récit*, 29; de Biasi, “La critique génétique,” 19.

March 1934. On the verso of the last folio, Szentkuthy noted “Folytatása jön” (“The continuation is coming”). On folio 31 (*P I*, 464), there is a stamp dated 23 March 1934.

4. Texts for the first issue of *Válasz* (see 2.3.6). Two folios with the fragment “Kalap” (*P I*, 8–13). At the top of the first folio, somebody wrote “*Prae*. Részletek Szentkuthy (Pfisterer) Miklós regényéből) 1. Kalap” (*Prae*. Fragments from Miklós Szentkuthy’s (Pfisterer) novel 1. Hat). There is also an official stamp with the date 7 October 1933, which means that, on that day, the proofs of the first copybook were sent to Szentkuthy. The texts also include three folios with: “2. Ruha” (Dress) (*P I*, 159–66); three folios with: “3. Erkölcsi ‘Sachlichkeit’” (Ethical “Sachlichkeit”) (*P II*, 534–9); and one folio with a fragment entitled: “4. Hasonlat a piros virágról” (Simile about the red flower) (*P II*, 281–3). In all of the texts, Szentkuthy marks the beginning and the end: “innen” (from here) and “idáig” (until here).

5. Other fragments: one folio with a fragment corresponding to *P I*, 92–95; one folio with fragment *P II*, 74–77; one folio with fragment *P II*, 97–99; one folio with fragment *P II*, 205–207; six folios with fragment *P I*, 35–51; 17 folios with fragments *P II*, 118–155 and *P II*, 165–171.

### 2.3.5 Table of Contents and the Second Edition

When *Prae* appeared in May of 1934, it did not include a table of contents. It was Dolly who suggested that Szentkuthy write a table contents that would make reading the book easier.<sup>271</sup> In effect, the table of contents appeared at the beginning of June 1934 as a separate booklet.<sup>272</sup> Dossier PIM V. 5498/23 contains the manuscript and the typescript of the table of contents. On the first page of the manuscript, Dolly notes that it was written 27–30 May 1934, typed on 31 May, and printed on 2 June. In addition, dossier PIM V. 5498/23/a contains a page with a typesetting model of the table of contents (dated by Dolly on the verso 2–4 June 1934). Dolly’s datings are thus contradictory, but we could assume that the table of contents was published more or less at the beginning of June.

At the end of June 1980, *Prae* reappeared in a new form (see 3.8). This edition of the book included two volumes, fourteen chapters, and a number of subchapters named after items in the table of contents, which was also included at the end of both volumes. There are several minor differences between the table of contents of the original booklet and that of the second edition. The most important difference is that the booklet uses empty lines and several types of indentations that clearly show the composition of the novel. The empty lines show logical breaks in the narrative, while the indentations mark digressions. In the 1980 version, however,

<sup>271</sup> The author’s interview with Mária Tompa (7–29 October 2010, Budapest).

<sup>272</sup> Miklós Szentkuthy, *Tartalommutató Szentkuthy Miklós PRAE c. művéhez* [Table of contents to Miklós Szentkuthy’s “Prae”] (Budapest: Királyi Magyar Egyetemi Nyomda, 1934). Many years later, Gyula Sipos translated the table of contents into French: Miklós Szentkuthy, “*Prae*: Table (1934),” trans. Gyula Sipos, *Le nouveau commerce*, no. 38 (Automne 1977): 133–59. Reprinted in *Hyperion: On the Future of Aesthetics* 7, no. 2 (18 July 2013): 97–115, accessed 25 October 2013, [http://www.contramundum.net/Hyperion/Documents/2.3-SzM-Prae\\_ToC.pdf](http://www.contramundum.net/Hyperion/Documents/2.3-SzM-Prae_ToC.pdf).

these breaks are minimalized, and only the *Non-Prae diagonals* are indented. In 2004, the third edition of *Prae* appeared with no further changes.

The present thesis concentrates on the process of the genesis of *Prae* in the years 1928–34, and hence it does not analyze changes in *Prae* after its first publication. From this perspective, the table of contents, as well as the second and third edition of *Prae*, may be called “after-texts” (*après-textes*), since they appeared subsequent to the first edition. Of course, as Genette observes, both the first edition and the booklet are *avant-textes*, from the perspective of the second edition.<sup>273</sup>

### 2.3.6 Minor Documents

The genetic dossier of *Prae* also includes numerous documents that are less significant from the perspective of this thesis. I list them here, even though the thesis does not address them in detail.

1. Fragments published in *Válasz*. Before *Prae* appeared, four fragments from the novel were published in the first issue of László Németh’s journal *Válasz* (Answer). Szentkuthy read Németh fragments from *Prae* as early as in the spring of 1933. Németh liked the novel and when he began to launch a new journal, he asked Szentkuthy for material to publish. In a letter dated 2 February 1934, Németh writes that the journal is going to appear at the end of March. He asks Szentkuthy to send him the proofs in order to choose an excerpt to publish.<sup>274</sup> After receiving the proofs, in the next letter, Németh writes that he would like to publish four or five excerpts.<sup>275</sup> Finally, the first issue of *Válasz* appeared on 1 May 1934 with four excerpts from *Prae*. They were entitled: “1. Kalap” (1. Hat); “2. Ruha” (2. Dress); “3. Erkölcsi ‘Sachlichkeit’” (3. Ethical “Sachlichkeit”); and “4. Hasonlat a piros virágról” (4. Simile about the red flower).<sup>276</sup>

2. Covers. In 1934, *Prae* appeared with a chamois cover on which the title and the author were printed in dark blue letters. However, it is only at the very last stage of editing that Szentkuthy decided on this version. The dossier PIM V. 5498/23/a contains several proposals for the cover with the title and author in green, red, and blue on papers with different shades of beige. The proposals were sent to Szentkuthy from the printing house in April of 1934. Dolly notes in her diary that she prefers red, but Szentkuthy eventually chose the blue lettering.<sup>277</sup>

3. *Third Non-Prae-diagonal*. When in the summer of 1933 Szentkuthy ordered a typesetting model, he gave the printing house one page with the text of the *Third Non-Prae-diagonal* (*P I*, 139–41). The manuscript of the page is in V. 5498/22/I, together with the

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<sup>273</sup> Gérard Genette, *Seuils* (Paris: Seuil, 1987), 367.

<sup>274</sup> *VL*, 310.

<sup>275</sup> *VL*, 310.

<sup>276</sup> Miklós Szentkuthy, “*Prae*: Részletek Szentkuthy Miklós regényéből” [“*Prae*”: Fragments from Miklós Szentkuthy’s novel] *Válasz* 1, no. 1 (May 1934): 26–39. The corresponding fragments in the *Prae* are: *P I*, 8–11; *P I*, 159–66; *P II*, 534–39; *P II*, 281–83.

<sup>277</sup> Dolly’s diary, 30 April 1934.



manuscript of *Prae*. The typesetting model that he received from the printing house is in PIM V. 5498/23/a together with its original covers. Unlike in the printed book, the text is not in italics; it lacks brackets and ellipses. On the verso of the page, Dolly wrote: “Első szedés minta a PRAE-ből (Egyetemi Nyomda) 1933 szept.” (The first typesetting model of *Prae* (University Press) September 1933). She must have misdated the page since we know from Szentkuthy’s letter that he received the model on 18 July 1933.<sup>278</sup>

4. A rewritten fragment. In dossier PIM V. 5498/43/II, together with the unpublished additions (see 1.3.3), there are two folios (nos. 8–9) with a rewritten text of one page from the first copybook.<sup>279</sup> The sheets are smaller than the copybook page and hence Szentkuthy needed two of them. Most probably he wanted to know how many pages *Prae* would include, and he needed to see how many small sheets correspond to a page in a copybook.

## 2.4 Epitexts

Grésillon notes that a genetic dossier can also include documents such as letters, diaries, or interviews in which the writer speaks of his works.<sup>280</sup> These documents are not traces of the writing process but they are important for reconstructing its genesis. I will refer to these documents using Gérard Genette’s term epitext (*épitexte*).<sup>281</sup> Genette defines epitexts as texts relating to a book but materially existing outside the book. More specifically, he means letters, diaries, and interviews, that is, documents that provide additional information about the genesis of a work. Following Genette, we can distinguish between public and private epitexts.<sup>282</sup>

The public epitexts of *Prae* include:

1. A series of interviews with Szentkuthy conducted by Lóránt Kabdebó between January and May of 1983, which, as edited by Mária Tompa, appeared in one large volume in May of 1988 as *Frivolities and Confessions*.<sup>283</sup>
2. Collected interviews from the years 1934–1988, edited by Márton Molnár and published in 2006 as *The Interogatee of Life*.<sup>284</sup>
3. A 12-hours long film made in 1986 in which Pál Réz interviews Szentkuthy in the writer’s apartment in Buda. The film was directed by András Jeles. Some parts of the interview appeared in the book *A Harmonious Ripped Soul*.<sup>285</sup>
4. Since Szentkuthy’s entire oeuvre has a diary-like character,<sup>286</sup> many of his books contain information on his writing process. These confessions are often very general, but in *Towards*

<sup>278</sup> Szentkuthy to Mária Hercz, 18 July 1933; Szentkuthy to Mária Hercz, 19 July 1933.

<sup>279</sup> PIM V. 5498/22/I/1, fol. 51v; *P I*, 91–92.

<sup>280</sup> Grésillon, *Éléments de critique génétique*, 100.

<sup>281</sup> Genette, *Seuils*, 10–11, 316. It should be noted that Genette considers *avant-textes* as a subgroup of epitexts, while in this thesis the epitexts are considered a subgroup of *avant-textes* (Genette, *Seuils*, 363–70).

<sup>282</sup> Genette, *Seuils*, 316–18, 341–42.

<sup>283</sup> From the perspective of *Prae*’s genesis the most important part is *FH*, 316–88.

<sup>284</sup> Szentkuthy, *Az élet faggatottja*.

<sup>285</sup> Szentkuthy, *Harmonikus tépett lélek*.

*the One and Only Metaphor* we can find direct references to *Prae*.<sup>287</sup> Also, in many passages of *Prae* itself, Szentkuthy comments on his writing (see 4.3.3).

The private epitexts of *Prae* include:

1. Szentkuthy's correspondence, which contains, among other things, letters to Dolly, Mária Hercz, and postcards that Szentkuthy sent to his parents during his honeymoon.

2. Diaries: Szentkuthy's early diary, published as *Play of Pains and Secrets*;<sup>288</sup> Dolly's diary and Dolly's expense diary. In addition, in July 2013, Szentkuthy's diary from the years 1932–48 was opened. It is possible that it also contains data on *Prae*. Unfortunately, as of October 2013, it remains unavailable to researchers.

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<sup>286</sup> On the diary character of Szentkuthy's works, see: Bálint, *Szentkuthy álruhában*, 19; Molnár, *Napló és regény Szentkuthy Miklós műveiben*, 47; Gintli, "Szentkuthy Miklós," 761–62.

<sup>287</sup> *EMF*, 110–11, 252; Szentkuthy, *Towards the One and Only Metaphor*, 131–32, 305.

<sup>288</sup> Szentkuthy, *Fájdalmak és titkok játéka*.

## 3 History of the Writing Process<sup>289</sup>

### 3.1 Introduction

The present chapter offers a general overview of the writing process of *Prae*. Relying upon the archival material described in section 2, the chapter reconstructs the chronology of the writing process and completes it with biographical data. Until now, very little has been known about the years 1928–34 during which Szentkuthy wrote *Prae*. The main source of information is the interview *Frivolities and Confessions*,<sup>290</sup> but there, Szentkuthy's account is very selective and concentrates more on anecdotes and inspirational sources than on the writing process itself. The main goal of this chapter is to present new data about the history of the writing process of *Prae* in a synthesized form. The chapter reveals many details unknown up until now, such as the fact that, similarly to *In Search of Lost Time*, *Prae* was written by the gradual accretion of different texts. Additionally, new biographical information is revealed, such as details concerning Szentkuthy's travels to England and Switzerland. The chapter also questions some prevalent opinions, which were based on Szentkuthy's account in *Frivolities and Confessions*. Four of the most blatant misconceptions are the following: Firstly, Szentkuthy finished *Prae* only in the spring of 1934, and not in 1932, as he mistakenly says in *Frivolities and Confessions*, as is usually stated in his biographical sketches.<sup>291</sup> Secondly, Szentkuthy stayed in London for only five months, not the whole year, as he often stated.<sup>292</sup> Thirdly, the trip to Switzerland took place in the summer of 1933—thus during his work on *Prae*—and not in 1935, as he later claimed.<sup>293</sup> Finally, after Geneva, Szentkuthy and Dolly did not visit Lake Garda—as Szentkuthy claims in *Frivolities and Confessions*—but traveled via the Swiss Alps back to Budapest.<sup>294</sup> The trip to Lake Garda did not take place until 1937.

Drawing upon de Biasi's typology of genetic phases, the analysis distinguishes between pre-compositional, compositional, publication, and post-publication phases.<sup>295</sup> The pre-compositional phase starts somewhere around Szentkuthy's early childhood and lasts until the autumn of 1928. During that phase, Szentkuthy planned to write a great masterpiece but he felt incapable of fulfilling his dream. The compositional phase lasted six years (autumn 1928–April 1934). An analysis of that phase reveals that Szentkuthy wrote *Prae* by the gradual

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<sup>289</sup> The first version of this chapter appeared as Filip Sikorski, "A *Prae* térképe: A regény keletkezésének öt fázisa" [The map of "Prae": Five phases of the novel's genesis], *Jelenkor* 54, no. 7–8 (July–August, 2011): 759–67.

<sup>290</sup> *FH*, 316–31.

<sup>291</sup> *FH*, 318. See, for example, Hegyi, *Szentkuthy Miklós*, 32, 128. The exception here is Pál Nagy who, also mistakenly, dates the completion of *Prae* as 1931 (Nagy, *Az elérhetetlen szöveg*, 44, 63).

<sup>292</sup> *FH*, 315, 319.

<sup>293</sup> *FH*, 381–82.

<sup>294</sup> *FH*, 387. I repeat Szentkuthy's mistake in my article in *Jelenkor*. Sikorski, "A *Prae* térképe," 765.

<sup>295</sup> De Biasi, *Génétique des textes*, 61–114. Typology of genetic phases appeared also in English as Pierre-Marc de Biasi, "What is a Literary Draft? Towards a Functional Typology of Genetic Documentation," *Yale French Studies*, no. 89 (1996): 26–58. Available online on the website of ITEM, accessed 25 October 2013, <http://www.item.ens.fr/index.php?id=13599>.

accretion of portions of text, a method similar to Proust's work on *In Search of Lost Time*.<sup>296</sup> The compositional phase is divided into five stages during which Szentkuthy worked on different parts of the texts. A period in which a writer concentrates on a given part of his work is called a "writing campaign" (*campagne d'écriture*),<sup>297</sup> but I prefer to speak of "stages," which is a clearer term. In the first stage (autumn 1928–October 1931), Szentkuthy began to write part 1 of the novel in checkered copybooks. In October 1931, he traveled to England and quit writing for some time. Next, in the second stage (late 1931–March 1932), he resumed writing, completed the second copybook, and continued work on part 2. In the third stage, when back in Budapest (April 1932–late 1932), Szentkuthy expanded the copybooks with three lengthy additions and finalized part 2. In the fourth stage (December 1932–May 1933), he wrote part 3. The fifth stage (May 1933–April 1934) is at the same time the pre-publishing phase and the final compositional stage. During that time, while Szentkuthy prepared the text for publication by correcting it, he also expanded the text with numerous additions. The fifth stage can be further subdivided into four periods. From May until August of 1933, Szentkuthy worked on the first copybook. Between September and October of 1933, he corrected and expanded part 3. In November and December of 1933, he worked on part 2. Finally, between January and February of 1934, he completed the second copybook. *Prae* appeared on 3 May 1934. One month later—this is already the post-publication phase—Szentkuthy published a table of contents to his novel as a separate booklet. In 1980, the second edition of *Prae* appeared. This time the table of contents was merged with the text. In 2004, *Prae* appeared for the third time with no further changes. In Appendix 1, the analysis is summed up in a synoptic table.

### 3.2 The Pre-compositional Phase: Early Childhood–Autumn of 1928

The pre-compositional phase, as it has been defined by de Biasi, is a preparatory period that involves preliminary research and general planning. It lasts until the moment when the writer makes a decision to begin a particular project.<sup>298</sup> As Daniel Ferrer shows, it is often difficult to define the starting point of a work of art. In his analysis of the genesis of Delacroix's painting the *Sultan of Morocco* (1845), Ferrer asks whether or not the fact that the *Death of Sardanapalus* (1827) already deals with orientalism allows us to consider *Sardanapalus* as the *Sultan's avant-texte*. Ferrer leaves this question open and concludes that it is the researcher's decision where to establish the initial point of genesis.<sup>299</sup> Likewise, it is difficult to say when the pre-compositional phase of *Prae* exactly began, since much of the material of the novel goes back to Szentkuthy's childhood and adolescent experiences. Since childhood,

<sup>296</sup> For a short but informative account of Proust's writing process, see: Dirk Van Hulle, *Textual Awareness: A Genetic Study of Late Manuscripts by Joyce, Proust, and Mann* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2004), 51–60.

<sup>297</sup> Grésillon, *Éléments de critique génétique*, 241.

<sup>298</sup> De Biasi, *Génétique des textes*, 78–84.

<sup>299</sup> Daniel Ferrer, "Les apories de l'avant-texte: La porte mesquine et l'ébauche dégoulinante," in *Logiques du brouillon*, 87–102.

Szentkuthy had already been dreaming about becoming the author of a great literary masterpiece. The opus magnum, however, remained an ideal that he was incapable of realizing. It is only in the autumn of 1928 that after many unsuccessful attempts he began to work on a novel, which would later become *Prae*. The beginning of *Prae* is thus problematic. On the one hand, since the material and ideas of *Prae* can be traced to Szentkuthy's early fantasies, it would be logical to consider the period of his childhood and adolescence as already the part of the development of *Prae*. However, in that case, the genetic dossier of *Prae* would expand to an immense size, since the archives of PIM contain much uncatalogued material from Szentkuthy's early years. Also, the nature of this study would change, since it would have to be devoted to a description of Szentkuthy's early plans. On the other hand, it would be equally logical to consider the return from the Grand Tour in the autumn of 1928 as the initialization of *Prae*. But such a solution would also be problematic since Szentkuthy's project cannot be fully understood without taking into account his pre-1928 plans and fantasies. Faced with this dilemma, I have decided to make a compromise. I regard the time prior to 1928 as a pre-compositional phase, but I will not analyze that phase in full detail. I give only a general and cursory account of the preparation process, leaving its more detailed investigation to future research. The return from the Grand Tour in the autumn of 1928 will be considered the end of the pre-compositional phase and the beginning of the compositional phase, which will be analyzed in more detail.

Szentkuthy was born on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of June 1908 in Budapest—at that time part of Austro-Hungarian Empire—as Miklós Pfisterer. His father, Lajos Pfisterer—descendant of a noble family that was struck by bankruptcy at the end of 19<sup>th</sup> century—worked in the Ministry of Religion and Education. Szentkuthy's mother, Gizella Pfisterer, née Götzler, came from a proletarian family. For the first six years of his childhood, the family lived in a poor district of Pest, before moving in 1914 to the other side of the Danube River, to Buda, to Enyedi (today Nagyenyed) Street.

During the period of the First World War (1914–18), Szentkuthy attended primary school on Werbőczy (today Táncsics) Street on Castle Hill in Buda. In 1918, at the age of ten, he began high school (also on Werbőczy Street), which he attended until 1926. During this time, Hungary was an arena of great historical changes. In 1918, Austria-Hungary was dissolved. In 1919, the Hungarian Soviet Republic was established, but it survived for only several months. In 1920, the Treaty of Trianon was signed, as a result of which Hungary lost 2/3 of its pre-war territory. According to Szentkuthy's memory, by that time, he wanted to become the “Dante of the twentieth century” by writing a great oeuvre that would display a panorama of his epoch.<sup>300</sup>

However, it was a trip to Italy in 1925 that impressed him more than the war events. In the autumn of 1925, on the occasion of the twenty-third Jubilee,<sup>301</sup> the seventeen-years-old

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<sup>300</sup> FH, 563.

<sup>301</sup> In the Catholic Church, the Jubilee is a special year announced by the Pope, during which more emphasis to spirituality is given. It usually involves a pilgrimage to Rome.

Szentkuthy accompanied his parents on a pilgrimage to Rome.<sup>302</sup> Having set out on the morning of the 4<sup>th</sup> of September, they arrived in Venice that very evening. Szentkuthy recalls the moment when they arrived at the Venetian railway station as love at first sight.<sup>303</sup> From that moment on, Venice became his favorite city, and it appeared in nearly every work he wrote, including *Prae*.<sup>304</sup> After Venice, they went via Firenze and Assisi to Rome. After staying five nights in Rome, on the 15<sup>th</sup> of September, they went to Naples. Next they visited the brothels of Pompeii,<sup>305</sup> the city of Sorrento, and the island of Capri, from whose shore the young Szentkuthy was trying to catch a glimpse of Sicily, obviously to no avail.<sup>306</sup> After that, they came back via Rome, Padua, and Venice to Budapest, where they arrived on the 19<sup>th</sup> of September. The Italian trip gave Szentkuthy the stimulus to write: apart from the poems, in which enthusiasm did not always compensate for quality,<sup>307</sup> he wrote a report for a school magazine, which became his first publication.

After his return to Budapest, Szentkuthy entered the final grade of high school and began to prepare for his graduation. In the winter, at the turn of 1925, an important event took place. László Vajthó, one of the teachers from Szentkuthy's school, convinced of his talent, took him to *Café Centrál* (a café in the center of Budapest) where the editorial board of the literary magazine *Napkelet* held its meetings.<sup>308</sup> There, Szentkuthy was introduced to Budapestian intellectuals—Gábor Halász, Antal Szerb, László Németh, to name only few—several of whom he would later form close friendships with. Many of the hot topics discussed at that time, such as the style *Neue Sachlichkeit*, or the method of *Geistesgeschichte*, would later find their way into the pages of *Prae*.

During the school year 1925–26, Szentkuthy continued to dream about becoming the Dante of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. This dream, however, was accompanied by an inability to write. The record of this frustrating experience from that time can be found in a semi-autobiographic novel, *Robert Baroque*, completed on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of November 1927, but not published until after Szentkuthy's death.<sup>309</sup> The novel is written in the form of a diary that describes the sexual and religious anxieties of an 18-year-old high school student named Robert Baroque, whom we can identify as Szentkuthy himself (in *Frivolities and Confessions*, Szentkuthy declares that the novel is about his father;<sup>310</sup> if Robert's father, Fülöp, was indeed modeled after Lajos Pfisterer, then we could consider Robert to be Szentkuthy's alter ego).

The book's main character, Robert, is haunted by the idea of a multi-volumed *opus magnum* encompassing every aspect of human life. "*I admire monumental series,*" says

<sup>302</sup> For the description of this trip, see *FH*, 244–47; *ÉF*, 49–50; Szentkuthy, "Prae: Recollections of My Career," 54; *ÉF*, 132–34. In the archives of PIM we can find the official schedule in the special issue of *Katolikus közlöny* 15 (1925): 4–7.

<sup>303</sup> *ÉF*, 132; *SZOB II*, 261.

<sup>304</sup> In *Prae*, Venice appears as many as eleven times: *PI*, 14, 18, 184, 287, 304–5, 508–9, 513–14; *PII*, 8–9, 356, 378, 407–9.

<sup>305</sup> See the memory of Pompeii in *SZOB V*, 20–22.

<sup>306</sup> See the memory of Capri in *SZOB III*, 303. Capri is also evoked in *BR*, 74.

<sup>307</sup> Some poems were published posthumously in *FTJ*, 12, 15.

<sup>308</sup> *FH*, 248, 251.

<sup>309</sup> For Szentkuthy's account of the novel: *FH*, 56–57.

<sup>310</sup> *FH*, 56.

Robert, “which include the totality of the world.”<sup>311</sup> Throughout the book there are many versions of this fantasy, but despite their variations, all of them have two essential features: 1. The book (or a series of books) should be as large as possible; 2. It should have a synthesizing character, and be an exhaustive presentation of a given subject. One of the most frequently mentioned projects is named *Creta Polycolor*, a series of four volumes, each one coming to eight hundred pages.<sup>312</sup> Robert’s other plans include: 1. *The Canadian Shakespeare*, a series of plays in a volume of over one thousand pages;<sup>313</sup> 2. *Monumenta Catholica*, a series of volumes, each of one thousand pages, comprising all the dogmas of Catholicism;<sup>314</sup> 3. *The Universal History of the Development of Art and Literature*, whose title was later changed into *The History of the Development of Humanity’s Spirit: Attempt at Writing a Genetic Universal History of Taste*: a great synthesis of the history of art, literature, and philosophy.<sup>315</sup>

The 18-year-old Szentkuthy was dreaming of becoming the author of a grand oeuvre, but he was incapable of writing it. Many pages of *Robert Baroque* attest to this paradox. Robert’s attempts at becoming a writer usually follow a similar pattern. First, the hero imagines the book he plans on writing. The vision gives him a feeling of ecstasy: he feels that he already knows all of the phrases of his future book.<sup>316</sup> But as soon as Robert starts to write, it turns out that he cannot express the idea that he has in mind. Sometimes he is unable to write anything; sometimes he writes only a few lines and then stops.<sup>317</sup> But even when he manages to produce a couple of lines, they never live up to his powerful vision.<sup>318</sup> What Robert experiences is that the words he writes lack the glow, flavor, and taste that they have in his imagination.<sup>319</sup> Thus, after a short time, he gives up writing: the ideal of a perfect book remains unachievable.

After his graduation, which took place in June of 1926, Szentkuthy spent the summer attending the Palatinus swimming-pool on Margaret Island, situated in the city center between Buda and Pest.<sup>320</sup> There, he was perusing the first volume of *In Search of Lost Time*. Szentkuthy claimed to be influenced by Proust, but without good knowledge of French, surrounded by girls in swimsuits who continually diverted his attention, he certainly could not immerse himself in the intricacies of the Proustian world; most probably, it was the size of the Proustian oeuvre that impressed Szentkuthy so much that he decided to write a novel as voluminous as *In Search of Lost Time*.

In the autumn of 1926, Szentkuthy enrolled at the university with the intention of studying English, French, and Hungarian philology. In 1927, he began to work as a book reviewer for

<sup>311</sup> “A monumentális sorozatok imponálnak, amelyben benne van ez az egész világ.” *BR*, 78. Italics in the original.

<sup>312</sup> *BR*, 17, 92, 149.

<sup>313</sup> “*Kanadai Shakespeare*.” *BR*, 92.

<sup>314</sup> *BR*, 226.

<sup>315</sup> “*Művészet és Irodalom egyetemes fejlődéstörténete*”; “*Az Emberiség Lélekfejlődéstörténete. Kísérlet egy Genetikus Általános Ízléstörténet megírására*.” *BR*, 236–39.

<sup>316</sup> *BR*, 18, 236.

<sup>317</sup> *BR*, 18, 20.

<sup>318</sup> *BR*, 241–42.

<sup>319</sup> *BR*, 152–53.

<sup>320</sup> *FH*, 316–17, 357.

the journal *Napkelet*.<sup>321</sup> At that time, he adopted “Szentkuthy” as his *nom de plume*. When his teacher László Vajthó complained that the initial cluster of the name Pfisterer does not sound euphonic enough for a Hungarian ear, the young Pfisterer took a railway timetable and there found the village of Szentkút, located northwest of Budapest.<sup>322</sup> The name of the village means “holy well,” hence “Szentkuthy” can be literally translated as “of the holy well.” The use of *u* instead of *ú*, *th* instead of *t*, and *y* instead of *i*—“Szentkuthy” instead of “Szentkúti”—gives the name an air of nobility, too.

But in 1927, a much more important event took place. As the academic year began, Dóra Eppinger, a new student, turned up at the seminar. Eppinger was a modest and intelligent girl from a family of wealthy, assimilated Budapestian Jews. No details are available concerning how their relationship began, except for the fact that, shortly thereafter, Szentkuthy and Dóra began to date. On the 22<sup>nd</sup> of May 1928, Szentkuthy was late for his mother’s birthday after having spent the whole evening with his girlfriend. That night, he fell in love with Dolly, as he would then nickname her.<sup>323</sup>

At approximately the same time, another woman entered his life. Mária Hercz was a student of English philology, a young aristocrat, and a bold freethinker. During the following years, Szentkuthy tried to balance between his love relation with Dolly and his intellectual friendship with Mária Hercz. The former would finally develop into marriage, the latter—into an ardent love affair, which lasted until 1938, when Mária, frightened by growing antisemitism, moved to Switzerland and never returned to Hungary.<sup>324</sup>

During the early years of his university period, Szentkuthy, unable to forget the experience of Italy, longed to leave Budapest and repeat his journey. Much as he missed Venice, he soon discovered new passions: England and France. Being too young to undertake a trip alone, Szentkuthy had to persuade his father to go with him. Pfisterer senior, who was at the time involved in a love affair, refused several times but eventually capitulated. Finally, in the summer of 1928, father and son set off for a carefully planned and prepared Grand Tour.

Unfortunately, knowledge of their trip is limited to its itinerary and some few incidents. They first went via Vienna to Paris, where they visited the Louvre. In *Canonized Despair*, Szentkuthy recalls two paintings that made a great influence on him: Fragonard’s *Sleeping Bacchante* and Greuze’s *Danae Receiving the Golden Shower*.<sup>325</sup> After Paris, they headed north, across the English Channel, to London. Next, having returned to France, they traveled south to the French Riviera, where they visited Cannes, Monaco, Nice and Menton. After that, they continued to Italy, and via Milan, Venice, and Trieste finally returned to Budapest.<sup>326</sup>

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<sup>321</sup> *FH*, 248–52. The reviews were published posthumously in Szentkuthy, *Múzsák testamentuma*, 431–47.

<sup>322</sup> *FH*, 251–52.

<sup>323</sup> *FH*, 277–78.

<sup>324</sup> *FH*, 282, 371–81.

<sup>325</sup> *SZOB III*, 239.

<sup>326</sup> *FH*, 81, 278.



The importance of the Tour can hardly be overestimated. Ceaseless conflicts with his father, who held French and English culture in contempt, did not prevent the young Szentkuthy from exulting at everything he saw. Many years later, he said that, during the tour, he was “living in such ceaseless ecstasy that I was almost ill.”<sup>327</sup> It is worth quoting a passage from the blurb that Szentkuthy wrote for the second edition of *Prae*. The paratactic syntax of the text reflects the panoply of sensations that the young student experienced:

In 1928, at the age of twenty, my father and me made a great tour of Europe. (...) I absorbed “everything”: cities, cathedrals, existential philosophy, mathematics, astronomy and modern theoretical physics, psychoanalysis, mythology. Luxurious nightclubs, theology, women’s fashion, ultramodern architecture, historical comedies, women and romances, exhibitions, concerts: this was my everyday life. Beauty of every landscape, biology of animals and plants, experimental theatres, museums night and day.<sup>328</sup>

But the most important effect of the Grand Tour was that Szentkuthy finally overcame his inability to write, and upon his return to Budapest in the autumn of 1928, he finally began to execute his project.

### 3.3 Compositional Phase. Stage 1: Autumn 1928–October 1931

The compositional phase is the phase in which a literary work is written. It starts with the writer’s decision to engage himself in a particular project and ends when the manuscript is ready for the final revision.<sup>329</sup>

The compositional phase of *Prae* starts in the autumn of 1928 and lasts until April of 1934. Within the span of the years 1928–34, it is possible to distinguish between five subsequent stages of work. The first stage starts in the autumn of 1928 when, after years of deliberation, Szentkuthy finally began to write his novel. The clear limit of the first stage is October 1931, when, after getting married, Szentkuthy left for London to pursue his studies and quit his literary work for some time. From the autumn of 1928 until October of 1931, Szentkuthy worked with two checkered copybooks that would later become the core of part 1 of *Prae*.

There is not much evidence regarding exactly what Szentkuthy did in the years 1928–1930. According to his testimony, starting from the autumn of 1928, he was working on his novel, but the evidence indicates that he did not start to fill the copybooks until early 1931. Thus, the years 1928–30 remain a mystery. We can only speculate whether he planned the novel, sketched it, or perhaps wrote some parts of it. What we know is that, after his return to Budapest in the autumn of 1928, Szentkuthy continued his studies. It was not until the spring

<sup>327</sup> “Szüntelen eksztázisban éltem, szinte beteg lettem tőle.” *ÉF*, 52; Szentkuthy, “Prae: Recollections of My Career,” 57.

<sup>328</sup> “1928-ban, 20 éves koromban apámmal hatalmas körutazást tettünk Európában. (...) Mindent felfaltam. Városokat és katedrálisokat, könyvtárakban egzisztencialista bölcseletet, matematikát, csillagászatot és legmodernebb elméleti fizikát, mélylélektant, mitológiát. Nagyvilági mulatók, teológia, női divat, ultramodern építészet, a történelmi múlt komédiái, nők és szerelmek, képkiállítások, koncertek, naponta. Ez volt az életem. Minden táj gyönyörűsége, állatok, növények biológiája, kísérleti színházak, múzeumok voltak éjjelem, nappalom.” *PI*, cover text.

<sup>329</sup> De Biasi, *Génétique des textes*, 84–98.

of 1930 that he probably handed in his master's thesis on André Gide, which, unfortunately, has not survived.<sup>330</sup> In the autumn semester of 1930, Szentkuthy started work on his doctoral dissertation on Ben Jonson's plays. The first diary entry concerning the dissertation is from the 30<sup>th</sup> of November 1930,<sup>331</sup> whereas the first drafts in which the material from *Prae* is recognizable are from the 10<sup>th</sup> of November.<sup>332</sup> Szentkuthy must have been a good student since on the 11<sup>th</sup> of December—with the dissertation still in progress—his English teacher Arthur Yolland already suggested that he should pursue his career and write a habilitation thesis, which would enable him to acquire the post of a university teacher.<sup>333</sup> At the beginning of 1931, while working on his dissertation, he finally began to write the novel in the copybooks.

The dissertation, *The Relation of Reality and Irreality in Ben Jonson's Classical Naturalism* (*Realitás és irreális viszonya Ben Jonson klasszikus naturalizmusában*), was accepted on the 13<sup>th</sup> of March 1931.<sup>334</sup> It consisted of three chapters and an appended draft of six subsequent chapters.<sup>335</sup> Starting from the 16<sup>th</sup> of March up until the summer of that year, Szentkuthy was training to be a teacher.<sup>336</sup> At the same time, after receiving his doctoral degree, Szentkuthy followed Yolland's suggestion: he decided to aim for his habilitation and so applied for a yearly scholarship to London.<sup>337</sup>

Szentkuthy spent June and July of 1931 with Dolly and her mother in the Alps. They first traveled to Austrian Carinthia, where they stayed in Heiligenblut, after which they went to Italy, to San Martino di Castrozza in the Dolomites.<sup>338</sup> All this time he was working on his novel. On the 19<sup>th</sup> of July, Szentkuthy's father sent him a telegram informing him that he was awarded the scholarship to London.<sup>339</sup> On the 28<sup>th</sup> of July, along with Dolly and her mother, Szentkuthy returned to Budapest.<sup>340</sup> In mid-September, he was informed that the scholarship was reduced and he would obtain money for only six months, not one year.<sup>341</sup> On the 19<sup>th</sup> of October 1931, Szentkuthy and Dolly got married; the following day they set out for London.

At the end of stage 1, Szentkuthy's novel was entitled *Antipsyché*; the title *Prae* was not invented until the final stages of the writing process. Szentkuthy already used the name *Antipsyché* in November of 1930, but at that time it was supposed to be one of the essays that he was planning for the series *Abouts and Brackets*.<sup>342</sup> The first evidence of his use of

<sup>330</sup> FH, 226. The master thesis must have been submitted in the spring of 1930 because in the autumn semester of 1930 Szentkuthy was already working on his doctoral dissertation.

<sup>331</sup> FTJ, 71.

<sup>332</sup> FTJ, 69.

<sup>333</sup> FTJ, 76.

<sup>334</sup> FTJ, 89.

<sup>335</sup> Miklós Szentkuthy, "Ben Jonson (1931)," in *Műsák testamentuma*, 501–61. The first chapter is an apology of Classical reason, set against unrestrained Romantic emotionality. In the second chapter, Szentkuthy discusses Jonson's predilection for classification of human characters. The third chapter discusses self-reflexivity in Jonson's plays and draws an analogy between Jonson and modern theatre.

<sup>336</sup> FTJ, 89. The diploma was sent to him in late June (Lajos Pfisterer to Szentkuthy, 29 June 1931).

<sup>337</sup> FH, 314–15.

<sup>338</sup> FH 598–599; Lajos Pfisterer to Szentkuthy, 29 June 1931; Lajos Pfisterer to Szentkuthy, 12 July 1931.

<sup>339</sup> Lajos Pfisterer to Szentkuthy, telegram, 19 July 1931.

<sup>340</sup> Szentkuthy to Lajos Pfisterer, postcard, 27 July 1931.

<sup>341</sup> Ernst s. k. (M. Kir. Vallás és Közoktatásügyi Ministerium) to Szentkuthy, 16 September 1931.

<sup>342</sup> FTJ, 67.

*Antipsyché* as a title for the novel is in a letter to Mária Hercz, dated June 1931.<sup>343</sup> Later, the name also appeared in a diary entry from the 15<sup>th</sup> of September 1931.<sup>344</sup> According to the letter, *Antipsyché* was going to be only one part of a cycle of many volumes.<sup>345</sup> Here we can recognize the idea of the monumental, multi-volumed work that Szentkuthy wrote of in *Robert Baroque*. Later, in his diary, he mentions three volumes of this proposed work entitled: *Antipsyché*, *Tours*, and *Éva-Bruegel*.<sup>346</sup> Eventually, he did not realize his plan and *Prae* came out in 1934 in only one volume.

The *Antipsyché* of 1931 equals roughly the first part of *Prae*, excluding the fragments attached in the later stages. Thus, many important passages had not been written at the time: the introduction (chapter 1), *Touqué's monologue* (chapters 2, 3), the *Antipsyché Idylls* (chapter 4), the *Non-Prae-diagonals*, the descriptions of Leatrice in chapter 5, the *Veronica and Ulva episode* (chapter 6), the *Leatrice and Halbert episode* from chapter 7, and numerous smaller additions. Also, while the end of the second copybook was completed in London, there is no evidence to determine how much of it was written in Budapest and how much in London.

The plot of the 1931 *Antipsyché* is very simple. Leatrice has been working in *Perspective* as a prostitute but wishes to move out and to start a new life. As Halbert and Anny arrive in *Perspective*, they meet a philosopher, Leville-Touqué, and Leatrice's friend Ena, with whom they discuss Leatrice's decision to quit her job. While Halbert opposes her choice, Ena supports her. Eventually Ena calls a taxi, and the two friends leave to go to a hotel. During the taxi ride, Leatrice and Ena reminisce about their past. Finally, they arrive at the hotel where Leatrice decides to rent a room with a view of the sea. In her room, Leatrice again begins to recall events from her past. The novel ends with a long surrealist vision (perhaps completed in London) about a woman having an abortion.

If the full contents of the copybooks were printed, they would come to 280 pages in the second edition format, that is, about 23% of the final 1200 pages. Since a part of the second copybook was written later in London, in 1931, the text was even shorter. Thus, the years 1928–31 were only the beginning of the writing process. Without multiple embeddings and long monologues but with much dialogue, the *Antipsyché* of 1931 was a simply structured novel, certainly not yet a masterpiece of modernism. Also, the language of the early *Antipsyché* does not show the stylistic maturity of the passages written in 1933 and 1934. When scholars observe that the style of *Prae* is uneven, it is precisely due to the fact that, in the final compositional stage, the early parts were completed with stylistically mature additions.<sup>347</sup>

<sup>343</sup> Szentkuthy to Mária Hercz, 13 June 1931.

<sup>344</sup> *FTJ*, 94.

<sup>345</sup> Szentkuthy to Mária Hercz, 13 June 1931.

<sup>346</sup> *FTJ*, 94.

<sup>347</sup> Mihály Szegedy-Maszák, "Felmagasztozás és tönkretétel: nyelv a két háború közötti regényben" [Transfiguration and ruination: language in the interwar novel], in *Szintézis nélküli évek: Nyelv, elbeszélés és világkép a harmincas évek epikájában* [Years without synthesis: Language, narrative, and world view in 1930s prose], ed. Lóránt Kabdebó and Ernő Kulcsár Szabó (Pécs: Janus Pannonius Egyetemi Kiadó, 1993), 25; Gintli and Schein, "Szentkuthy Miklós," 323.

### 3.4 Compositional Phase. Stage 2: Late 1931–March 1932

In October of 1931, Szentkuthy and Dolly married and left for their honeymoon to London.<sup>348</sup> Szentkuthy's then goal was to write a habilitation thesis on seventeenth-century English literature that would have allowed him to teach at a university. According to his testimony, he did work on the thesis for some time, and even wrote some parts of it.<sup>349</sup> To what extent he actually worked on it, and how much of it he wrote, remains an unanswerable question since the thesis is not extant. What we do know is that Szentkuthy never completed his habilitation; instead, he resumed work on *Antipsyché*.<sup>350</sup> Thus, during his sojourn to England, he finished the second copybook and began work on part 2 of *Prae*, a stage that lasted until the spring of 1932, which is when he returned to Budapest.

By the evening of the 20<sup>th</sup> of October, Szentkuthy and Dolly reached Astoria Hotel in Vienna, where they spent their wedding night.<sup>351</sup> From Vienna, they went first to Prague (22 Oct), where they marveled at modern (cubist) architecture.<sup>352</sup> In the evening of the 22<sup>nd</sup> of October, they continued to Berlin, where they spent some days visiting museums and art galleries (23–27 Oct). On the 25<sup>th</sup> of October, they visited *Gemäldegalerie*. It is most probably there that they saw Alessandro Magnasco's *Hochzeitszug*, a painting later described in *Prae*.<sup>353</sup> Many other memories from the trip found their way into the pages of *Prae*, too, such as a performance of *Intrigue and Love* under Max Reinhardt's direction, which Szentkuthy also saw in Berlin. Tired of traveling, although he slept throughout most of the performance, he remembered one detail of the stage design: a row of glass doors arranged one behind the other. The same image would later appear in *Prae* disguised as one of Leatrice's memories.<sup>354</sup> From Berlin, Szentkuthy and Dolly headed to Hamburg (27–29 Oct). There, in the harbor, Szentkuthy saw great oceangoing ships, which he would also mention in *Prae*.<sup>355</sup> Next, via Cologne and Aachen (30 Oct),<sup>356</sup> they went to Liège (31 Oct),<sup>357</sup> after which they visited Brussels (1 Nov), Antwerp (2 Nov), Bruges, and Gent (3 Nov).

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<sup>348</sup> I reconstruct Szentkuthy's trips on the basis of the postcards that he sent to his parents nearly every day, as well as the postcards and the letters that Dolly sent to her mother. The text of this section is based on a careful study of the archival material; however, after some consideration, I decided that it would be unnecessary to provide each event from Szentkuthy's trip with a reference to a particular postcard.

<sup>349</sup> *ÉF*, 52; Szentkuthy, "Prae: Recollections of My Career," 58.

<sup>350</sup> *ÉF*, 52; Szentkuthy, "Prae: Recollections of My Career," 58; *ÉF*, 106; *FH*, 315.

<sup>351</sup> *FTJ*, 98.

<sup>352</sup> See *FH*, 323.

<sup>353</sup> The painting's number is 138 in Geiger's numbering. The painting is presently in Berlin's Staatliche Museen. The catalogue from the *Gemäldegalerie* has survived in Szentkuthy's library. It consists of two volumes; on both of them Dolly wrote: "Berlin 25 October 1931." Magnasco's picture is in the first part, which presents Italian art. *Die Gemäldegalerie: Die italienischen Meister 16. bis 18. Jahrhundert; 300 Abbildungen* (Berlin: Paul Cassirer Verlag, 1930). The painting is described in *Prae* in detail in the subchapter entitled *Magnasco's reproduction as an illustration of the "impossibility" of love* (*P II*, 553–55). Whether Szentkuthy actually saw the painting in the gallery remains a matter of speculation; at very least, he must have seen it in the catalogue. The accuracy of the description—a good example of ekphrasis in Szentkuthy's writing—leaves no doubt that he was looking at the reproduction when describing the picture in the spring of 1933.

<sup>354</sup> *FH*, 102–3; *P II*, 130–32.

<sup>355</sup> *P II*, 122.

<sup>356</sup> See *SZOB III*, 333.

<sup>357</sup> See *FH*, 106.

By the 4<sup>th</sup> of November, Szentkuthy and Dolly reached Paris, where they stopped for several days. During the day, they went sightseeing (the Louvre, the Eiffel Tower, Notre Dame, Versailles), while in the evenings, they visited the theaters. On the 8<sup>th</sup> of November they saw Giraudoux's *Judith* in Théâtre Pigalle.<sup>358</sup> Inspired by the performance, the next day, they decided to go once again to the theater.<sup>359</sup> Most probably, it was at that time that Szentkuthy saw *La mauvaise conduite*, an adaptation of Plautus's comedy *Menaechmi*, which would later be mentioned in the opening pages of *Prae*. The play was staged in Théâtre du Vieux Colombier by the Compagnie des Quinze, an avant-garde theater group created in 1930 in Paris. *La mauvaise conduite* was the first performance of the second season, and the premier took place on the 5<sup>th</sup> of November 1931.<sup>360</sup> In *Prae*, Szentkuthy refers to the play only as "Plautus's piece."<sup>361</sup> Thus, the text of the novel does not disclose the hypotext, but the *avant-texte* does: the Compagnie des Quinze is mentioned in the drafts to the first chapter.<sup>362</sup> On the 11<sup>th</sup> of November, they crossed the stormy English Channel and arrived in Dover.<sup>363</sup>

On their arrival in London, Szentkuthy and Dolly settled in an apartment located at 55 Cleveland Square, in the Bayswater area.<sup>364</sup> Szentkuthy's daily routine included going to the British Museum Library, where he was supposed to work on his thesis. Dolly usually stayed at home. After work they met to go sightseeing, while in the evening they often went to a concert or to the theater. On the 28<sup>th</sup> of November, Szentkuthy reported that he began work in the library. On the 3<sup>rd</sup> of December, he already felt at "home" there and spent his time reading the works of James I. But his enthusiasm for academic research did not last long. As he recalled many times, his fascination with medieval cathedrals made him abandon his scholarly work and return to novel writing.<sup>365</sup> On the 4<sup>th</sup> of December, he bought two albums, one about English cathedrals, the other about castles.<sup>366</sup> Perhaps it is these books that inspired him to travel around England so that he could see the cathedrals and the castles with his own eyes. The first trip took place the next day, on the 6<sup>th</sup> of December, when, on the occasion of Miklós's name's day, Szentkuthy and Dolly went to Kenilworth Castle and Warwick. They made three more trips this year: to Southampton (10 Dec), Oxford (16 Dec), and Brighton (30

<sup>358</sup> The program of the performance is extant in Szentkuthy's Library.

<sup>359</sup> Szentkuthy to Lajos Pfisterer, postcard, 9 November 1931 (Szentkuthy writes that they are going that night to the theater); Dolly to Gizella Pfisterer, postcard, 10 November 1931 (Dolly says that they were in the theater the day before and that they will be going again).

<sup>360</sup> Jane Baldwin, "The Compagnie des Quinze and the Emergence of Michel Saint-Denis the Director," in *Michel Saint-Denis: The Shaping of the Modern Actor* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2003), chap. 4. In *Frivolities and Confessions* Szentkuthy misdates the performance as 1928. *FH*, 395.

<sup>361</sup> *P I*, 41–42. In *Prae*, it is Touqué who goes to Paris to see the Plautus play.

<sup>362</sup> PIM V. 5498/23, fol. 8. The group is also mentioned in *Metaphor* (*EMF*, 160, 211; Szentkuthy, *Towards the One and Only Metaphor*, 193, 254), and *Almanac of Humility* (*AK*, 64). Chapter on Love mentions "Plautus's stage" (*FSZ*, 49). When Szentkuthy mentions "experimental theaters" as one of the inspirations for *Prae*, he refers most probably to the Compagnie des Quinze (*FH*, 327). Plautus is also briefly mentioned in *SZOB III*, 185.

<sup>363</sup> See the description of the ferry trip: *FH*, 594.

<sup>364</sup> This address would later be mentioned in *Canonized Despair*, the eighth part of the *St. Orpheus Breviary*, which includes many autobiographical elements. *SZOB III*, 221, 222, 223.

<sup>365</sup> *ÉF*, 52; Szentkuthy, "Prae: Recollections of My Career," 58; *ÉF*, 105–6, 135; *FH*, 315.

<sup>366</sup> Both books are extant in his library: *Cathedrals: with seventy-four illustrations by photographic reproduction and seventy-four drawings* (London: The Great Western Railway, 1926); *Castles*, by Charles Oman, (London: The Great Western Railway, 1926). On the front page to both books there is a note: "London 1931 december [*sic*] 4. (Paddington Station Enquiry Office) Pfisterer Miklós."

Dec).<sup>367</sup> In the following year the number of travels increased. In January, Szentkuthy and Dolly visited Hampton Court (13 Jan), Wells, Bath (17 Jan), Windsor (23 Jan), and Gloucester (31 Jan). On the 14<sup>th</sup> of February, they went to Exeter. By that time Szentkuthy had already resumed work on the novel. Later he recalled that some parts of *Prae* were written there.<sup>368</sup> The following trips were to Edinburgh (20 Feb),<sup>369</sup> Lincoln (28 Feb),<sup>370</sup> Peterborough (28 Feb), Canterbury (9 Mar), Cambridge and Ely (12 Mar), York (13 Mar),<sup>371</sup> Oxford and Woodstock (20 Mar). In sum, Szentkuthy and Dolly spent no more than five months.<sup>372</sup> On the 21<sup>st</sup> of March, they departed from London and on the same day they reached France.<sup>373</sup>

Having visited Amiens (21 Mar), Laon, and Reims (22 Mar), Szentkuthy and Dolly arrived in Paris, where they stopped for about two weeks (22 Mar–5 Apr). From Paris they made numerous short trips to Fontainebleau (29 Mar), Chantilly (31 Mar), Versailles (2 Apr), and Bourges (3 Apr). They continued sightseeing and going to the theaters and revues, such as *Folies Bergère*, which they visited on 24 March.<sup>374</sup> After Paris, they went to Avignon (5–6 Apr) and then to Nice (7 Apr), from where they made brief visits to the neighboring towns: Monaco (7 Apr, 9 Apr, 12 Apr);<sup>375</sup> Cannes (8 Apr); Menton (9 Apr); Antibes (11 Apr). On the 13<sup>th</sup> of April, they took a train from Nice to Interlaken.<sup>376</sup> From Interlaken (14–16 Apr) they went for short trips to Bern (15 Apr), and Mürren (16 Apr). Next, they went to Luzern (17–18 Apr) and Zürich (19 Apr) where they were joined by Mária Hercz.<sup>377</sup> On the 20<sup>th</sup> of April, Szentkuthy, Dolly, and Mária took a train to Vienna. It is during this train journey that Szentkuthy's and Mária's love affair began.<sup>378</sup> On 22 April they were all back in Budapest.<sup>379</sup>

During the scholarship in London, Szentkuthy quit his habilitation and resumed work on *Prae*. He worked with two sets of texts. Firstly, he completed the second copybook; secondly, he began to work on part 2 of *Antipsyché*. We know that the final *Tilia Parvifolia* episode was written later but there is no sufficient evidence to say to what degree part 2 was ready when Szentkuthy returned to Budapest in April of 1932. We might nevertheless reasonably presume that the core of part 2 was written in London. Part 2 opened with Leatrice watching the sea and consisted mainly of Leatrice's memories. The text began with a series of achronological flashbacks, which were followed first by Péter's story, then a description of Leatrice's lesbian fascination with the Russian actress Zvinskaya (who was presumably modeled after Mária

<sup>367</sup> For a description of this trip, see: *FH*, 75–76.

<sup>368</sup> *FH*, 326; *VL*, 138. It is also in Exeter that Halbert's father (the narrator of part 3 of *Prae*) writes his diary.

<sup>369</sup> *FH*, 597.

<sup>370</sup> *FH*, 597. Szentkuthy went there without Dolly.

<sup>371</sup> *FH*, 597. Szentkuthy went there without Dolly.

<sup>372</sup> Szentkuthy is mistaken when he claims that he spent one year in London. *FH*, 315, 319.

<sup>373</sup> For a description of the smog over the Channel, see: *FH*, 594–95.

<sup>374</sup> The program and the tickets are extant in the writer's library.

<sup>375</sup> For a description of the famous casino, see: *FH*, 159, 592–93.

<sup>376</sup> For a description of this trip, see: *FH*, 599.

<sup>377</sup> *FH*, 373.

<sup>378</sup> *FH*, 374.

<sup>379</sup> In the part of *Prae* written in 1932, Szentkuthy mentions the 22<sup>nd</sup> of April as the day when the meeting of lovers takes place, a meeting that puts an end to an extended period of longing. *P I*, 442. Was he going to see anyone on that day in Budapest? Or was he going to have a date with Mária Hercz?

Hercz),<sup>380</sup> and finally Touqué's meditations. Interestingly, one of Leatrice's memories in the London text appears to be a reworked and extended fragment from *Robert Baroque*.<sup>381</sup> While many characters from the first part (Ena, Anny, Hilde, Yvonne) were abandoned, the character of Péter was given more emphasis. Touqué and Halbert remained but they appeared now only in Leatrice's memories. The new text included no dialogues, and it consisted mostly of descriptions. One can also observe a change in style. While some parts of the copybooks might be stylistically clumsy, the style of the London text begins to show signs of maturity. However, many important parts had not been written at that time. At the subsequent stage, 3, the text was completed with the final Tilia episode. At stage 5, it was corrected and completed with numerous additions, such as chapter 9, a prefatory chapter, and three *Non-Prae-diagonals*.

### 3.5 Compositional Phase. Stage 3: April 1932–Late 1932

Stage 3 began in April of 1932 when Szentkuthy returned to Budapest and lasted until December of 1932 when he started to work on the third part of *Prae*. In Budapest, Szentkuthy expanded *Antipsyché* with three lengthy additions. Two of them—*Touqué's monologue*, and the *Veronica and Ulva episode*—were written on the verso sides of the copybooks. The third addition, the *Antipsyché Idylls*, was written on loose sheets of paper and inserted at the end of Touqué's monologue. Apart from these three additions, Szentkuthy completed part 2 of *Prae*. We do not know how much of it was ready upon Szentkuthy's return to Budapest but, quite certainly, the final *Tilia Parvifolia episode* was written in Hungary.

<sup>380</sup> Szentkuthy designates both Zvinskaya in *Prae*, and Mária Hercz in *Frivolities and Confessions*, with the same name: "Geharnischte Venus." *P II*, 245; *FH*, 377, 380. The name is taken from the series of poems by a German baroque poet Kaspar Stieler. See Kaspar Stieler, *Die geharnischte Venus oder Liebes-Lieder im Kriege gedichtet*, ed. Herbert Zeman (München: Kösel, 1968). Since Szentkuthy often used Leatrice to talk about his own experiences, it is probable that descriptions of Zvinskaya's sex appeal, focalized through Leatrice, are a record of Szentkuthy's fascination with Mária Hercz.

<sup>381</sup> At the beginning of *Robert Baroque*, there is a scene in which Robert, his mother, and grandmother are waiting for his father to come (*BR*, 45–53). It is three o'clock, dinner is served, but the father is late. Robert and his mother suspect that the father might be having an affair. They decide to start the dinner without the father; they eat the soup in silence. Finally, the father comes. The mother looks at the clock on the wall: it is four o'clock. A similar scene is to be found in *Prae* (*P II*, 108–119, without pages 112–13, which are a later addition [no. 54]). Although the characters in the scene are different (Robert is replaced by young Leatrice; Robert's father becomes Péter, Leatrice's uncle; The mother and the grandmother are replaced by Leatrice's sisters Mária and Márta), many elements clearly indicate that Leatrice's memory can be traced back to the *Robert Baroque* scene: Leatrice, Mária, and Márta are waiting for Péter to have dinner (*P II*, 109; *BR*, 45); it is past three o'clock (*P II*, 109; *BR*, 45); much attention is given to the clock on the wall (*P II*, 108–10; *BR*, 51); it is already dark outside (*P II*, 110; *BR*, 49); the word "woman" in quotation marks is used to refer to a lover (*P II*, 114; *BR*, 48); both texts mention Baron Münchhausen: Robert remembers getting *Münchhausens's Adventures* as a gift, whereas Leatrice mentions the Baron in passing when she describes the clock striking: she compares the moment when the tune reaches its end and begins anew to Baron Münchhausen pulling himself out of the swamp by his own braid (*P II*, 114; *BR*, 49); in both texts there is also a scene with a priest: after the dinner Robert goes to see a priest; he walks through a corridor and arrives in a room with huge windows; in *Prae*, a similar scene is put immediately before the dinner memory: Leatrice recollects going to the confession, walking through a corridor and arriving in the priest's room with big windows (*P II*, 107; *BR*, 55–56).

Szentkuthy and Dolly returned to Budapest on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of April 1932. Since they did not yet have their own apartment, they first stayed in the Gröbel Hostel at Kossuth Square, in the centre of Pest.<sup>382</sup> Next, Szentkuthy moved to Dolly's mother's villa, after which he and Dolly moved together to their own apartment on Derék Street, on Naphegy Hill in Buda.<sup>383</sup>

In autumn of 1932, Szentkuthy began to work as a teacher at Imre Madách High School on Barcsay Street.<sup>384</sup> On the 8<sup>th</sup> of October 1932, his daughter Marion was born. While waiting for the delivery, Szentkuthy bumped into László Németh (whom he knew from the meetings in *Café Central*), whose wife was giving birth in the same hospital. During the conversation, Szentkuthy told Németh about the novel he was working on. Later in November, Németh, intrigued by what Szentkuthy had told him, asked him for the manuscript. Not surprisingly, Németh was, however, unable to decipher Szentkuthy's handwriting. He therefore asked the writer to come to read to his place in Felsőgöd (a small town by the Danube north of Budapest), but it was not until March of 1933 that the visit took place.<sup>385</sup> On the 23<sup>rd</sup> of December 1932, Szentkuthy began to write Halbert's father's diary, which marked the end of stage 3 and the beginning of stage 4.

At the end of 1932, *Antipsyché* consisted of two parts, or "chapters," as Szentkuthy called them.<sup>386</sup> The first part included the copybooks completed with *Touqué's monologue*, the *Antipsyché Idylls*, and the *Veronica and Ulva episode*. The second part encompassed part 2 and concluded with the *Tilia episode*. *Touqué's monologue*, which interrupts the initial scene in *Perspective* for almost 170 pages (in the second edition), was an important innovation that changed the structure of the novel. Part 1, which, until its original composition was a simple story dominated by dialogues, became enhanced with a long digression containing series of images and scenes from Touqué's childhood. Five new characters appeared in the novel, all of them being women named after plants: Veronica Chamaedrys, Ulva di Chara, Tilia Parvifolia, Potentilla, and Ajuga. The Riviera imagery was reinforced by numerous descriptions in *Touqué's monologue* and the *Veronica and Ulva episode*.

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<sup>382</sup> See the notes in the Bergson books (2.2.1). In a letter to her mother, Dolly asks her to find a good hostel, perhaps Gröbel (Dolly to Gézáne Eppinger, 3 March 1932). The same request appears in Szentkuthy's postcard to his parents from Nice (Szentkuthy to Lajos Pfisterer, postcard, 12 April 1932).

<sup>383</sup> On the versos to the *Antipsyché Idylls*, Szentkuthy notes that he stayed in the villa in the summer of 1932 for about ten days (see notes to addition 14), after Gröbel Hostel and before moving to Derék Street.

<sup>384</sup> *FH*, 342, 349, 353.

<sup>385</sup> Németh describes these events in *MM*, 41.

<sup>386</sup> *FTJ*, 105



### 3.6 Compositional Phase. Stage 4: December 1932–May 1933

In late 1932, when the two “chapters” of *Antipsyché* were completed, it might have seemed that Szentkuthy’s novel was at last finished. But in late December of 1932, Szentkuthy began to write an utterly new text, which he finished in May of 1933, and which would become the third part of *Prae*, or chapter 14 in the later second edition.

The new text, which Szentkuthy referred to as a “diary,” was written in the form of a monologue of an Exeter parson whom Szentkuthy would later announce to be Halbert’s father. The fact that the Exeter parson was Halbert’s father was made explicit only in the last periods of the fifth stage of composition: in additions 59 and 43.<sup>387</sup> The monologue consists mostly of an achronological series of memories interwoven with philosophical meditations. This form allowed Szentkuthy to freely put in the text his ideas and experiences without being concerned with narrative logic.

The first half of 1933 appears to have been an unhappy period in Szentkuthy’s life. A note on the verso of the manuscript sheets (see 2.3.1.2), and the somber tone of his diary, attest to the existential crisis that Szentkuthy was undergoing. His depression was compounded by the political situation in Europe: on the 30<sup>th</sup> of January, Hitler became the Chancellor of the Third Reich and in May the first book burnings took place.

In March and May of 1933, Szentkuthy visited László Németh in Felsőögd and read him some parts from the new manuscript.<sup>388</sup> Németh enthusiastically reported on their meetings in the June issue of his magazine *Tanú*. It is in this article that the title *Prae* appears for the first time.<sup>389</sup> At this point, Szentkuthy must have understood that he was not going to realize the idea of the multi-volumed work that he had been planning since his early adolescence. Instead of a series of large novels, he had a manuscript consisting of three parts written respectively in 1928–32, 1931–32, and 1932–33. Forced to postpone this idea until an indeterminate future, he decided to entitle his book *Prae*, implying that it is still not *the* great novel but only a preface to his future works.

### 3.7 Compositional Phase. Stage 5: May 1933–April 1934

Starting from May of 1933, *Prae* entered the pre-publishing phase, a phase in which the manuscript was prepared for the publication.<sup>390</sup> The phase lasted until May of 1934, when *Prae* was published. During this phase, Szentkuthy corrected the manuscript, gave it to the printing house in parts, and then corrected the proofs. However, between work on the

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<sup>387</sup> *P II*, 192; *P I*, 504.

<sup>388</sup> See Németh’s letters in *VL*, 309–10 and Szentkuthy’s recollections of their meeting in *FH*, 332, 335.

<sup>389</sup> László Németh, “Magyar kaleidoszkóp,” in *MM*, 18–20. Németh especially liked one of the fragments from Halbert’s father’s diary: “In one of the finest of the passages that were read out to me, the Anglican parson justifies why he is moved more by a good deed that, in itself, is pure chance than by a morally integrated person.” Trans. Tim Wilkinson (unpublished). “A felolvasott részek közül egyik legszebbikben az anglikán pap azt okolja meg, mért hat rá mélyebben egy magában álló véletlen jó cselekedet, mint egy erkölcsileg egységes ember.” *MM*, 20. Németh refers to the following passage: *P II*, 535–39.

<sup>390</sup> De Biasi, *Génétique des textes*, 99–108.

manuscript, he also expanded *Prae* with more than one hundred additions. Thus, the pre-publishing phase of the manuscript coincided with the fifth compositional stage. As table 2 shows, the stage can be subdivided into four periods depending on the part of the manuscript Szentkuthy was working on.

**Table 2** Periods of work in the fifth compositional stage

	Period	Part of the manuscript corrected and completed with additions	Corresponding part of the printed text (2 <sup>nd</sup> edition)
1.	May–August 1933	the first copybook	chapters 1–5
2.	September–October 1933	oblong sheets (part 3)	chapter 14
3.	November–December 1933	oblong sheets (part 2)	chapters 9–13
4.	January–February 1934	the second copybook	chapters 5–8

The first period begins in May 1933, when after finishing the Exeter parson's diary Szentkuthy began to correct his manuscript and expand it with additions. In this period, Szentkuthy worked with the first copybook. The first addition that can be dated was written on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of May (addition 23). Most probably, Szentkuthy first worked with the rectos of the copybook (additions 30 and 33 to the rectos are dated June 1933) and then in July moved to Touqué's monologue (on the versos) and the *Antipsyché Idylls*.

In the early summer, Szentkuthy worked either at home at Derék Street or in a nearby villa at Avar Street, where Mária Hercz rented a room.<sup>391</sup> But, from the 14<sup>th</sup> of July until the 14<sup>th</sup> of October, that is, for exactly three months, due to unknown reasons, the Pfisterers could not stay in their apartment.<sup>392</sup> On the 14<sup>th</sup> of July, Dolly left for her family's summer cottage in Basaharc (North of Budapest), while Szentkuthy moved to Mária Hercz's room. The same day Mária left for Austria leaving the writer alone with his work.<sup>393</sup>

Szentkuthy's summer idyll did not last long. On the 17<sup>th</sup> of July, Dolly came to visit him and stayed overnight. When the owner of the villa saw her leaving in the morning, he did not believe that the woman Szentkuthy spent the night with was his wife, and threw him out of the villa for indecent behavior. Dolly went back to Basaharc, while Szentkuthy had to move to his parents' home on Enyedi Street (nowadays Nagyenyed Street) where he continued his work.<sup>394</sup>

<sup>391</sup> See description of the villa: *FH*, 379.

<sup>392</sup> According to an entry in Dolly's diary, she spent the time 14 July–14 October in her family's summer cottage in Basaharc (Dolly's diary, 8 November 1933). When Szentkuthy was thrown out from the villa in Avar Street (see below), he was forced to live at his parents' (instead of moving back to Derék Street), where he also stayed until the 14<sup>th</sup> of October (PIM V. 5498/23, fol. 13). It is unclear why they could not stay in Derék Street during the summer, especially because in that period Szentkuthy did visit the empty flat (Szentkuthy to Mária Hercz, 19 July 1933).

<sup>393</sup> Hercz must have left on the 14<sup>th</sup> of July for in the letter from the 21<sup>st</sup> of July Szentkuthy says it has been a week since they saw each other (Szentkuthy to Mária Hercz, 21 July 1933). She went first to Austria, then in August to Switzerland. See *FH*, 379.

<sup>394</sup> The event is described in *FH*, 379–80. The date appears in three different sources. In Einstein's book *On the Method of Theoretical Physics* (see 2.2.3), in a letter to Mária Hercz (Szentkuthy to Mária Hercz, 18 July 1933), and on the verso of addition 12 (see Appendix 2).

At the same time, he received some good news: he had won a scholarship to the Geneva International Summer School on the League of Nations.<sup>395</sup> Back in 1932–33, he participated in the seminar of the Hungarian Society of Foreign Affairs (Magyar Külügyi Társaság), and in March of 1933, his final essay about mandate states won an award of 50 pengő.<sup>396</sup> When Théodore Ruysen, the secretary general of the Union of Associations of the League of Nations, proposed a scholarship for a Hungarian student, the Hungarian Society decided to give the grant to Szentkuthy.<sup>397</sup>

It was also in mid-July that Szentkuthy started negotiations with the Royal University Press (Királyi Egyetemi Nyomda). On the 18<sup>th</sup> of July, he received the first typesetting model: a page with the beginning of the *Third Non-Prae-diagonal*. He was happy and inspired to see his writing finally in print.<sup>398</sup> The whole book, however, was estimated to cost 4200 pengő, an amount of money that neither Szentkuthy nor Dolly could afford.<sup>399</sup> As a high school teacher, Szentkuthy earned 108 pengő per month, while a university teacher's salary was as much as 1000 pengő.<sup>400</sup> Dolly had a tenement house at Népszínház Street that she had received as a dowry and from which she earned 1000 pengő monthly.<sup>401</sup> This was a sure monthly gain but she did not want to mortgage the house.<sup>402</sup> Instead, she decided to ask for the money from Géza Danzig (Dános), who was her distant relative and, what is more important, a well-to-do banker.<sup>403</sup> On the 14<sup>th</sup> of August, in the morning, the Pfisterers bought train tickets to Geneva. After that, Dolly went to negotiate with Danzig, who finally agreed to lend her the money.<sup>404</sup> On the 16<sup>th</sup> of August, Szentkuthy signed an agreement with the publisher: 4200 pengő was to be paid until February of 1934 (though later, as the manuscript expanded with additions, the price rose to 5700 pengő).<sup>405</sup> In the morning of the 17<sup>th</sup> of August, Szentkuthy brought the first copybook of the first part of *Prae* to the printing house. The same day, at eight o'clock in the evening, the Pfisterers left for Venice.<sup>406</sup>

They traveled through Venice (18–19 Aug), Verona (20 Aug), and Milan (21 Aug). On the morning of the 22<sup>nd</sup> of August, Szentkuthy and Dolly left Milan, and in the afternoon they arrived in Geneva, where they stayed in Pension Ducatte, 11 rue de Candolle.<sup>407</sup> The next day, the course began. During the day Szentkuthy attended lectures, while at night—if we are to

<sup>395</sup> On the 14<sup>th</sup> of July he notes that he won the scholarship (PIM V. 5498/23, fol. 7), but the official letter is dated 17 July (VL, 234).

<sup>396</sup> FH, 384; VL, 233. In *Frivolities and Confessions*, Szentkuthy misdates the course as 1935 (FH, 381) and Katalin Hegyi repeats his error (Hegyi, *Szentkuthy Miklós*, 48). There can be no doubt that the summer course took place in 1933. All evidence (drafts, letters, Dolly's diary, hotel bills, the program of the course) points to this fact.

<sup>397</sup> Albert von Bodman to Olivér Eöttevény, 9 July 1933.

<sup>398</sup> Szentkuthy to Mária Hercz, 18 July 1933; Szentkuthy to Hercz, 19 July 1933. See 2.3.6.

<sup>399</sup> Dolly's diary, 9 August 1933; PIM V. 5498/23, fol. 10; Dr. E/N (Királyi Magyar Egyetemi Nyomda) to Szentkuthy, 4 April 1934.

<sup>400</sup> Dolly's diary, 23 February 1935; Dolly's diary, 17 August 1934.

<sup>401</sup> FH, 342, 380; Dolly's diary, 17 August 1934.

<sup>402</sup> Szentkuthy to Mária Hercz, 3 August 1933; Dolly's diary, 9 August 1933.

<sup>403</sup> Szentkuthy to Mária Hercz, 8 August 1933; Dolly's diary, 9 August 1933.

<sup>404</sup> Szentkuthy to Mária Hercz, 14 August 1933; PIM V. 5498/23, fol. 9.

<sup>405</sup> Királyi Magyar Egyetemi Nyomda to Szentkuthy, 4 April 1934.

<sup>406</sup> Dolly's diary, 16 August 1933; PIM V. 5498/23, fol. 10.

<sup>407</sup> This trip, as well as the trip back to Budapest is reconstructed on the basis of the postcards which Szentkuthy sent to his parents, hotel bills, Dolly's diary and Dolly's expenses diary.

believe the poetic letters that he sent to Mária Hercz—he wandered around the parks of Geneva.<sup>408</sup> On the 31<sup>st</sup> of August, Léopold Boissier, later president of the International Committee of the Red Cross, gave a party in the famous Villa Diodati, where Mary Shelley began to write *Frankenstein* in 1816. Szentkuthy was at the party and the villa that he describes in the *Fifth Non-Prae-diagonal*<sup>409</sup> may be based on his visit to Villa Diodati. The summer course ended on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of September. The next day (3 Sep, Sunday), Szentkuthy and Dolly left for Lausanne. They had a dinner there, after which they went along the Genevian Lake. In the evening, they arrived in Montreux, where they spent a night in hotel Bon Accueil. On Monday (4 Sep) they headed to Locarno, where they stayed for two nights in pension Villa Daheim. On Wednesday (6 Sep), they continued to St. Moritz, a small town in the Engadin Valley, where they stayed for two nights in Hotel Rhätia. On Thursday (7 Sep), they went for a short trip and visited the neighboring town of Champfèr. The afternoon they spent by the shore of Lake Sils, which is situated south of Champfèr. On Friday (8 Sep) they left St. Moritz, went via Davos to Vienna and from there to Budapest, where they arrived on 10 September. After the return to Budapest, Dolly went back to Basaharc, while Szentkuthy returned to his parents' to Enyedi Street. The Pfisterers did not move back to Derék Street until 14 October.

It should be noted that Szentkuthy is mistaken in claiming that, after the Summer University, he traveled to Italy. In *Frivolities and Confessions*—that is from the perspective of fifty years—he recollects marveling at the cypresses while reading Herodotus in a hotel room overlooking Lago di Garda.<sup>410</sup> However, Dolly's entry in her expense diary shows the precise itinerary of their journey: Geneva is followed by Lausanne, Montreux, Locarno, St. Moritz, Davos and Vienna.<sup>411</sup> An unsent postcard from Malcesine (which is a village on the shore of Lake Garda), on which Szentkuthy wrote "Gardone 1937 szept. 8–9," would suggest that it was during his trip to Northern Italy in 1937 that he visited Gardone.<sup>412</sup> A similar conclusion can be made on the basis of *Black Renaissance*. The book, written in 1937, includes both a description of the cypresses at the shore of Lake Garda, and references to Herodotus: descriptions of Brunelleschi's illustrations of Herodotus's *Clio*.<sup>413</sup> Given Szentkuthy's habit of putting his experiences immediately into the text (see 6.1) he was currently working on, it is more probable that he visited Gardone in 1937, not in 1933.

Upon his return to Budapest, Szentkuthy began to correct the third part of *Prae* (the diary of Halbert's father) and completed it with additions. In some of them, he included his memories of Switzerland (see 6.5). On the 25<sup>th</sup> of September, he was appointed as an English teacher in the Barcsay Street Madách High School, where he had already been teaching for a year.<sup>414</sup> On the 7<sup>th</sup> of October, the proofs of the first copybook arrived. The diary must have

<sup>408</sup> The program of the Summer School has survived and can be found in the archive of PIM. As for the parks, see letters to Mária Hercz: Szentkuthy to Mária Hercz, 23 August 1933; Szentkuthy to Mária Hercz, 25 August 1933; Szentkuthy to Mária Hercz, 29 August 1933.

<sup>409</sup> *P II*, 153–58; *FH*, 385.

<sup>410</sup> *FH*, 387.

<sup>411</sup> Dolly's expenses diary.

<sup>412</sup> *FH*, 403.

<sup>413</sup> *SZOB I*, 233–34; 223–30.

<sup>414</sup> PIM V. 5498/23, fol. 12; Dolly's diary, 8 November 1933.

been ready by mid-October because on the 24<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> of October the proofs of the diary arrived. After that, throughout November and December, Szentkuthy continued writing part 2, the proofs of which came on the 30<sup>th</sup> of December 1933. At the beginning of 1934, Szentkuthy finalized the second copybook. The last dated addition is no. 43; it is dated 14–19 February. Szentkuthy received the proofs of the second copybook on the 17<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> of March. At the end of April, the printing house sent Szentkuthy their proposals for the cover. Dolly liked the one with a title in red, but Szentkuthy chose the blue one. On the 1<sup>st</sup> of May, László Németh published four fragments from *Prae* in his new journal *Válasz*. Two days later, on Thursday the 3<sup>rd</sup> of May, the hefty tome *Prae* came out in one thousand copies.

### 3.8. Post-publication phase

In May of 1934, *Prae* entered into the publication phase, a phase that includes changes in the novel occurring after its publication.<sup>415</sup> At the beginning of June, Szentkuthy published a table of contents to *Prae*.<sup>416</sup> Although he was indifferent to the criticism his novel received, he did listen attentively to the critical remarks of his wife. The unreasonably long paragraphs combined with the complexity of the text were a factor that made *Prae* a difficult novel, even to a sympathetic reader. Thus, at Dolly's request, Szentkuthy revised his novel to include a table of contents, but this appeared as a separate booklet.

Despite the upheaval caused by the publication of *Prae*, the novel did not sell well and, still in the 1950s, Szentkuthy's parents' apartment was packed with unsold copies. By the 1970s, however, the writer's popularity was gradually increasing and the book was practically unavailable.<sup>417</sup> In 1978, György Kardos, director of the Magvető publishing house, who had already republished the *Saint Orpheus Breviary* (in 1973 and in 1976), called Szentkuthy and said he would like to reissue *Prae*. Already in 1976, Szentkuthy considered that, if *Prae* would ever be republished, it should be divided into chapters whose titles would be items from the table of contents.<sup>418</sup> However, in 1978, he was struggling with depression and felt incapable of doing the editorial work. He thus employed a secretary, Mária Tompa, who undertook the difficult task of re-editing *Prae*. Her work consisted of three operations: 1) she divided the three large parts into fourteen chapters; 2) she divided the text according to the items from the table of contents, so that each chapter was divided into many subchapters, while the items from the table of contents became titles of the subchapters; 3) she divided each sub-chapter into smaller parts by adding paragraph breaks (at least three per page). Tompa reedited the book between April and July of 1978.<sup>419</sup> In 1980, *Prae* came out in a new, reader-friendly guise: two volumes, fourteen chapters, and a number of subchapters whose titles were taken from the table of contents. Szentkuthy died in 1988. In 2004, the third

<sup>415</sup> De Biasi, *Génétique des textes*, 108–14.

<sup>416</sup> Szentkuthy, *Tartalommutató Szentkuthy Miklós PRAE c. művéhez*.

<sup>417</sup> *FH*, 85–86, 328–29.

<sup>418</sup> *ÉF*, 53; Szentkuthy, "Prae: Recollection of My Career," 58.

<sup>419</sup> *FH*, 345; *ÉF*, 141.

edition of *Prae* appeared, with no further changes. In 2013, the entirety of *Prae* (the text was based on the second edition) was published online on the website of PIM as part of the digitalization program under the name of Digital Literary Academy (Digitális Irodalmi Akadémia).<sup>420</sup>

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<sup>420</sup> Szentkuthy Miklós, *Prae*, the website of PIM, accessed 25 February 2014, <http://dia.jadox.pim.hu/jetspeed/displayXhtml?offset=1&origOffset=-1&docId=10860&secId=984317&qdcId=3&libraryId=-1&filter=Szentkuthy+Mikl%C3%B3s&limit=1000&pageSet=1>.

## 4 Additions

### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter analyzes the genesis of additions that Szentkuthy attached to the manuscript of *Prae* in the final stage of composition, from May of 1933 until February of 1934. The story of the additions begins thus in May of 1933 when, after finishing the third part of *Prae*, Szentkuthy began to prepare his manuscript for publication. As he started to reread and correct the text, the quality of the manuscript disappointed him. At the same time, new books and new experiences provided him with new thematic material. Eager to introduce the new material into *Prae*, but unwilling to rewrite the whole text, Szentkuthy decided to complete the manuscript with additions, which he wrote on small pieces of paper and attached to the manuscript with paper clips. In effect, the final text grew by half: one third of the final version was written in the final stage of writing. Thus, the seemingly uniform text of *Prae* actually consists of two thematically different layers: the main text and the additions. Knowledge of the layered structure of the novel will be helpful in any research focused on how Szentkuthy's ideas evolved in the course of his writing *Prae*. The researcher will be able to study the development of themes and ideas by comparing the main text to the additions. He will also be able to concentrate on individual additions and investigate how Szentkuthy expanded or commented on the given passage in the main text.

This chapter begins by describing the circumstances of the genesis of the additions (4.2). Then, a short overview of the new themes introduced by the additions is given (4.3). The next—somewhat digressive—section (4.4) shows a minor but certainly interesting case, additions 20 and 43, whose content is contradictory with the main text. The section speculates that the contradiction might be due rather to the writer's oversight than to a conscious poetical principle, and that one of the characteristics of Szentkuthy's writing process might include inadequate editing. Finally, I draw conclusions and make proposals for future research (4.5). Appendix 2 provides an exhaustive list of all of the additions, which are identified and numbered. I will refer to the additions using numbers from the list.

### 4.2 Genesis

At the beginning of May 1933, Szentkuthy finished the Exeter parson's diary. Now, after five years of work, he had three blocks of text at his disposal: the copybooks, part 2, and the diary. In his article in the June 1933 issue of *Tanú*, László Németh reports on his encounter with Szentkuthy in May and announces that *Prae* will appear in autumn, which indicates that, at that point, Szentkuthy considered the novel finished.<sup>421</sup> What he had to do now was to reread the whole novel and to prepare the manuscript for publication. But Szentkuthy did more than

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<sup>421</sup> *MM*, 18.

just correct the text; during the correction stage, he began to expand it with additions. Three factors explain this decision.

Firstly, we know that Szentkuthy was not satisfied with the quality of his text. The summer of 1933 was probably the first time that he reread the text that he had originally written in 1931. Over the course of two years, which is a long time for a young writer, his style and thinking evolved and he must have felt a need to improve the text he wrote at that time. Three different pieces of evidence attest to Szentkuthy's dissatisfaction with the 1933 version of *Prae*. In *Frivolities and Confessions*, he recalls that during those years of writing, his style and thinking underwent such immense development that when he reread the manuscript of *Prae* in 1933, the text seemed to him "obsolete."<sup>422</sup> Also, Dolly's diary attests to Szentkuthy's disappointment. According to an entry from January of 1934, Szentkuthy complained that reading his old text made him feel as if he were facing his own dead body. He also compared the work of correction to putting lipstick on the lips of a dead person, which clearly shows the degree of his dissatisfaction.<sup>423</sup> Also, addition 5 bears testimony to his disappointment. The draft to the addition, sketched in late June of 1933, begins with an observation that *Prae* fails to give account of the things which have been the most important to Szentkuthy: his subjective experiences, his dreams, and his desires.<sup>424</sup> The draft was later developed into an addition, which Szentkuthy named *Interpolation* (see draft 4 and its analysis in 5.3). The addition, set in italics, interrupts Touqué's monologue with the words: "*Not this; not this!*" implying that Szentkuthy is not satisfied with the preceding text. Then the addition repeats the statement from the draft, according to which the novel is unable to convey the writer's innermost experience: "*If the title of this writing as a whole is Prae, does Prae say anything about what it wants? No, it does not.*"<sup>425</sup> These words reveal Szentkuthy's urgent need to reconceive his novel.

At the same time—this is the second factor that contributed to the emergence of additions—Szentkuthy discovered new thematic material that inspired him to continue writing. In the summer of 1933, he reads extensively books on physics and philosophy; his interest in architecture grows; his personal experiences made him reflect upon the nature of love, whereas rereading *Prae* made him theorize on the principles and mechanisms of novel writing. These five themes—modern physics, German philosophy, modern architecture, polyamorousness, and novel writing—are scarcely present in the previous stages, but they are strongly present in the additions. In section 4.3, I present a brief overview of this new material.

If Szentkuthy considered the manuscript obsolete, in theory he could have discarded the old text and continued with the new material. But—this is the third factor behind the additions—already from the times of *Robert Baroque*, Szentkuthy's priority was to make his book as large as possible (see 3.2). Discarding the old text was then out of question, for no matter how obsolete it was, it was not the quality but the quantity that mattered.

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<sup>422</sup> "Elavult." *FH*, 332.

<sup>423</sup> Dolly's diary, 19 January 1934.

<sup>424</sup> PIM V. 5498/23, fol. 6.

<sup>425</sup> "*Nem ezt; nem ezt!*," "*Ha ennek az egész iratnak Prae a címe: szól-e hát a Prae arról, amiről akar? Nem.*" *P I*, 84–85. Trans. Tim Wilkinson (unpublished). Italics in the original.



Given these three factors—dissatisfaction with the manuscript, discovery of new themes, and unwillingness to discard the old material—the most logical decision was to redevelop the text with additions. Szentkuthy already had the experience of this technique, since in 1932 he added three longer additions to *Prae: Touqué's monologue*, the *Antipsyché Idylls*, and the *Veronica and Ulva episode*. At this stage of the writing of *Prae*, he decided to apply a similar solution. It enabled him both to keep old material, and to insert new material, thanks to which he could make his work even more voluminous. Unlike the three 1932 additions, which were written on the versos of the copybooks (*Touqué's monologue* and the *Veronica and Ulva episode*), or on separate pieces of paper simply inserted into the manuscript (the *Antipsyché Idylls*), the 1933 additions were written on small pieces of paper and attached to the manuscript with paper clips.

Two circumstances point to the fact that completing the text with additions was a spontaneous decision. Firstly, in his article in the June 1933 issue of *Tanú*, Németh announces that *Prae* will appear in autumn of that year.<sup>426</sup> Németh must have received this information from Szentkuthy, whom he met in March and May of 1933. If in May Szentkuthy thought *Prae* would appear in the autumn, at that time he could not have planned to recommence the writing process. Thus, most likely, it was only during the process of rereading that he had the idea of expanding his text. Secondly, when Szentkuthy signed the agreement with the printing house on the 16<sup>th</sup> of August 1933, the printing of *Prae* was supposed to cost 4200 pengő. However, later, the price rose 1500 pengő more, which would entail the printing of ten additional sheets.<sup>427</sup> The increase in price must have been caused by the additions written in the periods subsequent to September 1933 and February 1934. This indicates that, at the moment of signing the agreement, Szentkuthy did not envisage that his work was going to expand even more after his return to Budapest from Switzerland. Thus, again, completing the text with additions was not a planned decision, but a spontaneous process.

It should be noted that Szentkuthy did mark seven of the 1933 additions in the printed text. They are the so-called *Interpolation*, which is followed by six *Non-Prae-diagonals*.<sup>428</sup> The *Interpolation* and the first three *Diagonals* are included in *Touqué's monologue*. The fourth, fifth, and sixth *Diagonal* are inserted into Leatrice's memories in part 2. *Interpolation* and the *Diagonals* are set in italics, set in brackets, and separated from the main text by line breaks with the exception of the end of the third diagonal, which is followed by the text without a line break. All of the *Diagonals* begin and end with ellipses. The seven additions unexpectedly disrupt the text without being narratively connected to it, producing by this an effect of collage. When in *Frivolities and Confessions* Szentkuthy comments on the *Diagonals*, he says that, during the years of writing them, he gained new experiences, his style and his thinking changed, and for this reason he decided to include the italicized additions in the final version of the book.<sup>429</sup> But what he does not say is that, apart from these seven clearly marked fragments, he completed the manuscript with more than one hundred

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<sup>426</sup> *MM*, 18.

<sup>427</sup> Királyi Magyar Egyetemi Nyomda to Szentkuthy, 4 April 1934.

<sup>428</sup> Additions no. 5, 8, 9, 11, 52, 56, 62.

<sup>429</sup> *FH*, 332.

other additions, which he did not make visible in the final text, and which we can see only in the manuscript of *Prae*.

Finally, a general observation can be made concerning the narrative relation of the additions to the main text. From this perspective, the additions could be divided into three categories. The first category includes the aforementioned six italicized *Non-Prae-diagonals* which interrupt the main text and do not seem to be narratively related to it. The second category includes the additions that are metatextual comments concerning the novel's narrative structure. These additions are listed in 4.3.3. The third, and the widest category, comprises the rest of the additions, whose relation to the main text can be characterized as supplementary. For the most part, the additions introduce a new perspective to the train of thoughts. Often they expand a description, or complete a monologue with new examples or analogies. Sometimes the new perspective provided by the addition may eventually digress into an entirely new theme, or even contradict the previous train of thoughts.<sup>430</sup> Since the scope of this thesis does not permit the systematic and exhaustive analysis of all hundred additions, it remains a task for future research to specify and classify the relations between the additions and the main text.

## 4.3 New Themes

A preliminary thematic analysis of *Prae* reveals that some themes are only scarcely present in the main text, but they appear in the additions with great frequency. I have managed to detect five such themes: physics, German philosophy, modern architecture, polyamorousness, and novel writing. With the exception of architecture, it is possible to show that the origins of these themes can be traced to the events of 1933. Thus, the material for physics and German philosophy comes from the books Szentkuthy read in the summer of 1933. Polyamorous ideas were provided by Szentkuthy's personal situation during that time. Reflections on novel writing were presumably prompted by Szentkuthy's rereading of his own text. Thus, most probably, one of the reasons why Szentkuthy expanded the manuscript of *Prae* with additions was his desire to express these new interests and new experiences in his novel.

As just stated, an exhaustive and thorough thematic analysis of the additions remains to be done in the future. Leaving thus the full thematic inventory of the additions to another time, I shall make now a brief overview of the five themes I have managed to identify. I deal here

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<sup>430</sup> As an example of a contradictory relation between the main text and the additions, we could mention addition 20, which is further analyzed in 4.4. In the main text (a scene at the beginning of chapter 5), when Touqué observes a vase in Leatrice's hands, it seems to him that women are detached from whatever objects surround them (*P I*, 250–51). When he looks at women moving in the world of everyday objects, he feels that there is a radical difference between the women and the objects around them. What he perceives is a strange milieu around women, which is like a vacuum in a Thermos bottle, and which prevents women from connecting with objects. When Leatrice takes the vase in her hands, Touqué feels sorry that the vase is in hands that are alien to it. But in the addition, a totally different theory is exposed. The addition begins with a description of the image seen by Touqué: Leatrice's back in the mirror, Leatrice herself, and the vase. What Touqué actually sees, says Szentkuthy, are three Leatrices, because "the vase is also a part of Leatrice's body" ("Hiszen a váza is testéhez tartozott." *P I*, 252). It is worth noting that the idea of anatomic connection between a woman and a vase already appears in the *Tilia episode*, which was written in 1932. *P II*, 296).

with the themes of physics and philosophy only cursorily since they are discussed in more detail elsewhere. The theme of physics appears very sporadically in the first stages of composition. It became fully developed only in the summer of 1933, when Szentkuthy began to read books on physics. References to famous physicists and the usage of scientific vocabulary are mostly visible in the additions attached in the first period of stage 5 (additions 1, 2, 5, 7, 9, 16, 19, 21, 22, 31). The influence of physics is analyzed in more detail in 6.3. In a similar way, the documentary evidence shows that Szentkuthy's interest in German philosophy (i.e., works by Heidegger and Husserl) had its peak in the summer of 1933. Their influence—references to Heidegger and Husserl, usage of German philosophical terms—can also be seen in the additions from the first period of stage 5 (additions 1, 2, 5, 7, 11, 20, 21, 31, 38, 47). The influence of German philosophy is analyzed more thoroughly in 6.4. Let us now concentrate on the themes of architecture, polyamorousness, and novel writing.

### 4.3.1 Modern Architecture

In the earliest stages of the compositional phase, Szentkuthy was already deeply interested in architecture and liked to describe his own architectural projects in the text of his novel. Hence, in the parts written in stage 1, we shall find descriptions of *Perspective*,<sup>431</sup> Leatrice's room,<sup>432</sup> the bathroom in *Perspective*,<sup>433</sup> Gerda Staalbreck's clinic in Norway,<sup>434</sup> and the hotel to which Leatrice moved.<sup>435</sup> Touqué's monologue (stage 3) includes a description of Touqué's mother's boutique, named *Perroquet Galant*.<sup>436</sup> The parson's diary (stage 4) contains a description of a church in cubist style, and later on, some theoretical reflections concerning analogies between the syntax of the handicapped girl's speech, the nature of love, and characteristics of modern design.<sup>437</sup> It can be said that, to a certain degree, the theme of modern architecture has thus been present in *Prae* from the beginning. However, the peak of Szentkuthy's interest in architecture is in the last stage of the compositional phase, when in less than a year he invented fifteen plans for buildings or interiors (including eight churches) and described them in the additions.

In the first period of stage 5, Szentkuthy designed a black marble baptistry that illustrated the relation of *Prae* and *Non-Prae* (addition 5);<sup>438</sup> two rooms which illustrate the work of adult desire: a modern room with variations on the theme of red undulatory lines (addition 6),<sup>439</sup> and a dining room (addition 7),<sup>440</sup> a glass church with black metal columns, which

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<sup>431</sup> *P I*, 50.

<sup>432</sup> *P I*, 51.

<sup>433</sup> *P I*, 287–82.

<sup>434</sup> *P I*, 366–71.

<sup>435</sup> *P I*, 402–4.

<sup>436</sup> *P I*, 128–29.

<sup>437</sup> *P II*, 418–19; *P II*, 568–71.

<sup>438</sup> *P I*, 87. A similar plan is repeated in *Black Renaissance*. *SZOB I*, 222; Miklós Szentkuthy, "Excerpt from *Black Renaissance: St. Orpheus Breviary II*," trans. Tim Wilkinson, *Hyperion: On the Future of Aesthetics* 7, no. 2 (18 July 2013): 260.

<sup>439</sup> *P I*, 90.

illustrates a new novelistic form (addition 30).<sup>441</sup> He also completed the description of Gerda Staalbreck's clinic from the first stage (addition 38).<sup>442</sup> In the second period, during the correction of the parson's diary, Szentkuthy added to the text projects of a bedroom (addition 84)<sup>443</sup> and a modern villa (addition 86).<sup>444</sup> Szentkuthy's drawings of these two projects can be found in the PIM archives.<sup>445</sup> In the same period, he also designed plans for two churches, which he did not attach to the manuscript: a church based on a spherical triangle (drawn on the same folio as the bedroom and the villa), and a church based on the shape of a thermometer. Both unattached additions are in the PIM archives (see 2.3.3). I published and commented on the texts in the October 2012 issue of the Hungarian journal *Holmi*.<sup>446</sup> In the third period, Szentkuthy designed a theater—an allegory of loneliness (addition 47),<sup>447</sup> and three more churches: Leatrice's project, in which metal balls symbolize snow (addition 53),<sup>448</sup> the boy's project from the *Sixth Non-Prae-diagonal*, which illustrates the impossibility of knowing another person (addition 62),<sup>449</sup> and the church, which emerges out of Leatrice's movements in the night (addition 66).<sup>450</sup> In the fourth period, in the *Leatrice and Halbert episode* (addition 43), there are two more churches, which illustrate the opposition between rationality and irrationality.<sup>451</sup>

A comparison of all of these projects shows that, in the last stage of the work on *Prae*, Szentkuthy developed his own architectural style. Generally speaking, Szentkuthy's buildings are based on basic forms and are deprived of decoration, which are features typical of modern architecture (for instance, Bauhaus style). More particularly, two most frequently occurring characteristics in Szentkuthy's plans are the extensive usage of glass and the dominance of the color black. Table 3 shows the similarities between Szentkuthy's projects. The only project not included here is the church in the shape of thermometer (published in *Holmi*).

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<sup>440</sup> *P I*, 97–98.

<sup>441</sup> *P I*, 342–43; the drawing of the church can be found in PIM V. 5498/23, fol. 3.

<sup>442</sup> *P I*, 374–78.

<sup>443</sup> *P II*, 338.

<sup>444</sup> *P II*, 351.

<sup>445</sup> PIM V. 5498/23, fol. 11.

<sup>446</sup> Sikorski, "Három ismeretlen 'Prae'-részlet." In the article I argue that the spheric triangle church was probably to be attached in *P II*, 62, after addition 48.

<sup>447</sup> *P II*, 19.

<sup>448</sup> *P II*, 105–6.

<sup>449</sup> *P II*, 217–18.

<sup>450</sup> *P II*, 262–63.

<sup>451</sup> *P I*, 506–7.

**Table 3** Comparison of Szentkuthy's architectural projects in *Prae*

project	glass	black color
baptistry ( <i>P I</i> , 87)	gigantic window	black marble
room ( <i>P I</i> , 90)	glass wall	
dining room ( <i>P I</i> , 98)		black walls
church ( <i>P I</i> , 342–43)	glass wall	black columns
sanatorium ( <i>P I</i> , 374–78)	glass walls, ceilings, staircase, lift	black “U” letters
church ( <i>P I</i> , 506–7)	glass walls	black letters
church ( <i>P I</i> , 507)	glass altar	black walls
theater ( <i>P II</i> , 19)	glass pipe (lamp)	black velvet walls
church ( <i>P II</i> , 106)	glass wall	
church ( <i>P II</i> , 217)	glass walls	black stripe and table
church ( <i>P II</i> , 262)	black glass walls	black glass walls
bedroom ( <i>P II</i> , 338)	glass wall	black wooden walls
villa ( <i>P II</i> , 351)	glass walls	
church ( <i>Holmi</i> 24, no. 10, p. 1255)	glass wall	black benches

Szentkuthy continued to invent new projects in the books written directly after *Prae*. For instance, *Narcissus's Mirror* (written in 1934) includes a description of an oval room with a male figure, which is supposed to be an allegory of masturbation,<sup>452</sup> whereas in *Almanac of Humility* (written between 1935 and 1936), we find “architectural sex metaphors,” that is, plans of bedrooms designed to illustrate sexual intercourse.<sup>453</sup> In the same book, we also find two churches and a baptistry that recycle the material from the two projects that were not attached to *Prae*.<sup>454</sup> Later, beginning with *Chapter on Love* (1936), Szentkuthy's interest turned to history and the role of modern architecture in his books was diminished at the expense of Renaissance and Baroque buildings.

### 4.3.2 Polyamorousness

Love, both in its physical and emotional aspects, as Gyula Sipos has observed, is one of the central themes of *Prae*.<sup>455</sup> However, genetic analysis specifies that it is only in the fifth stage of writing—probably due to personal experiences—that Szentkuthy's theory of love was fully developed and achieved the most sophisticated form. In the first stage, love is presented in a rather unrefined way simply as Touqué's desire for Leatrice, and it is usually accompanied by misogynist remarks. For instance, in chapter 2, while looking at Leatrice, Touqué states that her “elementary stupidity (...) only increased the woman's erotic value.”<sup>456</sup> And at the

<sup>452</sup> Szentkuthy, *Narcisszus tükre*, 14–15

<sup>453</sup> *AK*, 213–17.

<sup>454</sup> *AK*, 221–23. See Sikorski, “Három ismeretlen ‘Prae’-részlet,” 1254. The recycling of thematic material has been theorised by Grésillon as *écriture vagabonde* (wandering writing). Almuth Grésillon, “Proust ou l'écriture vagabonde: Genèse de la ‘Matinée’ dans *La Prisonnière*,” in *La mise en oeuvre*, 155–75.

<sup>455</sup> Sipos, “Prae: Dissémination et Montage du roman,” 125.

<sup>456</sup> “Az elementáris butaság (...) csak fokozta a nő erotikus értékét.” *P I*, 78

beginning of chapter 5, Touqué wants to kiss Leatrice, while at the same time he contends that she is a “sick” and “hysterical”<sup>457</sup> woman characterized by “enormous stupidity.”<sup>458</sup> In the second stage, the theme of love is limited mostly to Péter’s unsuccessful love life, marked by guilt, sin, and the fear of venereal disease.<sup>459</sup> In the third stage, Touqué’s monologue praises the social and intellectual dimension of a love relationship.<sup>460</sup> In the fourth stage, the Exeter parson describes his sexual adventures: kissing a girl in Switzerland and making love with a handicapped girl in Cambridge.<sup>461</sup> Some space is also given to reflections on Christian *caritas*.<sup>462</sup> It is only in the final stage of composition that Szentkuthy’s philosophy of love achieved the most full and coherent form. The following additions are the most important from the perspective of the theme of love: addition 1 (chapter 1); addition 9 (*Second Non-Prae-diagonal*); additions 97 and 113; addition 47 (chapter 9); additions 52 and 56 (*Fourth and Fifth Non-Prae-diagonals*); addition 43 (the *Leatrice and Halbert episode*).

As it becomes clear with the drafts to *Prae*, in the summer of 1933, Szentkuthy found himself involved in a relationship with three women: his wife and two lovers.<sup>463</sup> The *Second Non-Prae-diagonal* offers an insight into what Szentkuthy might have experienced. The hero of the diagonal is a man trapped in a love “quadrangle” with three women: his wife, and two lovers. He is having dinner with his lover in a countryside cottage. The man is worried that the girl will find out that he has another lover and at the same time he realizes he has to return home to his wife.<sup>464</sup> A similar situation is described in addition 97, where it turns out that the Exeter parson also has a wife and two lovers.<sup>465</sup> Also, the vision of a man’s two lovers killing each other might be of autobiographical inspiration (see addition 81).<sup>466</sup>

Szentkuthy’s reflections on love are fragmentary and they are placed in different parts of his novel. However, a thematic analysis of the additions reveals that, in the last stage of writing, Szentkuthy was developing a coherent and systematic philosophy of love. Given the biographical context, we can understand his reflections as an attempt to understand his personal predicament and to justify his infidelity. The content of the additions can be summarized in three main theses.

According to the first thesis, love is essentially not a human emotion but a physical force that also exists beyond humans. Being in love is equal to being affected by this force. This is how Touqué feels in chapter 1 during a sleepless night he spends in Nice. Walking around the city, he imagines that he and the girl whom he is going to meet are “worms in an autonomous space of his amorous feeling.”<sup>467</sup> This means that, instead of carrying a feeling of love in himself, he is only the receiver of a non-human (hence autonomous) force of love coming

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<sup>457</sup> “Beteg,” “hisztérikus.” *P I*, 247.

<sup>458</sup> “Grandiózus butaság.” *P I*, 263.

<sup>459</sup> *P II*, 197–98, 202, 250–51.

<sup>460</sup> *P I*, 88–89, 100–101.

<sup>461</sup> *P II*, 484–90; 583–85.

<sup>462</sup> *P II*, 519–27.

<sup>463</sup> See note in the draft PIM V. 5498/23, fol. 13.

<sup>464</sup> *P I*, 122.

<sup>465</sup> *P II*, 421–22.

<sup>466</sup> *P II*, 330.

<sup>467</sup> “Kukacok voltak szerelmi érzése önálló terében.” *P I*, 35.

from outside. Likewise, in addition 97, the Exeter parson describes love as a “wave of emotion” or a “formless whirl of emotion,” where a man is only an additional “thin membrane.”<sup>468</sup> Szentkuthy would develop this idea further in the novel *Chapter on Love*. Chapter 43 of the novel is a eulogy on Aphrodite inspired by Empedocles’s philosophy. Drawing upon Empedocles’s fragments, Szentkuthy presents Aphrodite, that is, love as a physical force operating both on the level of chemical reactions and human relations, uniting both elementary matter and human beings.<sup>469</sup>

According to the second thesis, love is ethically superior to social norms, which are always a limitation of the force of love (germs of this idea are also visible in the earlier stages of the novel).<sup>470</sup> The opposition between Szentkuthy’s Empedoclean-inflected notion of love and social norms appears most clearly in the *Leatrice and Halbert episode*, which starts with the words “Leatrice’s and Halbert’s meeting was amorous not human.”<sup>471</sup> After that, Szentkuthy introduces two opposite terms, “character” (*jellem*) and “human” (*ember*). While “character” (which is not to be confused with literary character) refers to someone who is able to surrender to the passion of love, the “human” (or elsewhere “woman-human” [*nő-ember*])<sup>472</sup> is someone living according to the norms of society and hence, unable to love. Szentkuthy devotes the rest of the addition to assert the superiority of “character” over what is “human.” Also, addition 47 (chapter 9) is a short story about how passionate love can be destroyed by social norms. The protagonists of the story, a boy and a girl, are in love, but when the girl becomes pregnant the boy begins to hate her since the consequence of having a baby is getting married (that is, obeying a social norm), which the boy considers the end of love. The boy wants to punish the girl by killing her, for she made a morally wrong choice: by choosing the social norms she betrayed the feeling of love.<sup>473</sup>

Finally, the third thesis: being in a polyamorous relation, one betrays the other person, but one remains faithful to the force of love, which is the ethically superior choice. Such is the moral of the *Second Non-Prae-diagonal*: the man caught in a love “quadrangle” is being unfaithful to his wife, but by having many lovers he remains faithful to love.<sup>474</sup> Infidelity, says the Exeter parson in addition 97, is a natural thing: negative connotations of the word do not affect the inherent goodness of infidelity, and the greatest love is the one that is unfaithful (to what is human).<sup>475</sup> Likewise, addition 113 presents the story of an unfaithful husband who claims to be innocent for he considers love to be a feeling that is not related to any concrete person.<sup>476</sup> The only infidelity that is wrong is infidelity to love, that is, choosing social norms over the passion of love. Hence, in addition 47, when the girl becomes pregnant, the boy

<sup>468</sup> “Érzéshullám,” “alakatlan érzésörvény,” “vékony hártya.” *P II*, 422.

<sup>469</sup> *FSZ*, 142–59; Szentkuthy read this fragment to Karl Kerényi and Kerényi praised it. *FH*, 484, 360; *SZOB III*, 337. Surprisingly, Szentkuthy never mentions the other elementary force, which is Strife. See Brad Inwood, *Introduction to “The Poem of Empedocles”* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001), 49–68.

<sup>470</sup> *P I*, 229–35; *P II*, 250, 297; *P II*, 396.

<sup>471</sup> “Leatrice és Halbert találkozása szerelmi találkozás volt, nem emberi.” *P I*, 485.

<sup>472</sup> *P I*, 124; *P II*, 34; *SZOB I*, 131.

<sup>473</sup> *P II*, 49–52.

<sup>474</sup> *P I*, 124–25.

<sup>475</sup> *P II*, 420–23.

<sup>476</sup> *P II*, 544–45.

wishes she had betrayed him: if she had been unfaithful to him, she would at least have remained in the sphere of love, but by becoming pregnant she chose social life over love.<sup>477</sup> Similar ideas return in the works written directly after *Prae*. For instance, in *Narcissus's Mirror*, infidelity is interpreted as love for life,<sup>478</sup> whereas in *Almanac of Humility*, Szentkuthy explains that infidelity is impossible because for him women are not persons but only impressions.<sup>479</sup>

The theme of love thus developed during the final stage on his work on *Prae* remained important to Szentkuthy for the remainder of his life. Even forty years later, in *Canonized Despair* (1974), he speaks of love as “alien and unknown primeval force,” which is equal to “the whole of nature,”<sup>480</sup> and in a 1986 interview he compared women to objects of art or flowers; he wonders why he should love one woman since just as he loves Rubens, Michelangelo, gerberas and chrysanthemums, he is also able to divide his love between many women.<sup>481</sup>

### 4.3.3 Novel Writing

*Prae* is famous for containing numerous passages in which Szentkuthy reflects on questions of novel writing. The most known example is chapter 1, which is entirely devoted to the questions of writing techniques and the poetics of the novel. The metafictional character of chapter 1 led many scholars to claim that the whole of *Prae* is a novel about a novel,<sup>482</sup> but in fact the theme of novel writing is limited to only some fragments, most of which did not appear until the fifth composition stage. In other words, almost every passage concerning novel writing is an addition attached to the manuscript during the revision that occurred between May of 1933 and February of 1934 (additions 1, 5, 30, 38, 43, 47).<sup>483</sup>

It looks as if it was the revision of the manuscript that gave Szentkuthy the impulse to reflect upon the process of writing. Many additions that concern the theme of novel writing can thus be understood as a reflection on his five years of work, and as a presentation of his *ars poetica*. One other hypothetical source of these additions might have been the works of André Gide.<sup>484</sup> Gide was famous for incorporating his theoretical reflections on novel writing

<sup>477</sup> *P II*, 49.

<sup>478</sup> Szentkuthy, *Narcisszus tükre*, 31–32.

<sup>479</sup> *AK*, 170–71.

<sup>480</sup> *SZOB III*, 46.

<sup>481</sup> Szentkuthy, *Harmonikus tépett lélek*, 157.

<sup>482</sup> Rugási, *Szent Orpheus arcképe*, 13; Béládi, “Prae, vagy regény a regényről,” 226; Sipos, “Prae: Dissémination et Montage du roman,” 128; Fekete, “Prae,” 99; Grendel, “Szentkuthy Miklós (1908–1988),” 318; Bata, “A regény regénye, a Prae,” 18. According to a Hungarian encyclopedia of literature *Prae* “tells about the preparation of a possible novel” (“egy lehetséges regény előkészületeiről számolt be”). Béla Pomogáts, “Szentkuthy Miklós,” in *Új magyar irodalmi lexikon* [New encyclopedia of Hungarian literature] (Budapest: Akadémiai, 1994), 3:1961.

<sup>483</sup> Only two passages were written during the earlier stages: a vague and not very comprehensible idea of “basic elements” of fiction, which Szentkuthy drafted in his early diary, and which later found its way into chapter 5 (*FTJ*, 28; *P I*, 360–62); and an analysis from chapter 7 concerning the function of the retrospection technique in the novel. The passage was later crossed out and became the background for addition 30 (see below).

<sup>484</sup> A parallel to *The Counterfeiters* has been observed by Grendel in “Szentkuthy Miklós (1908–1988),” 318.



into the text of his novels. For instance, in *Counterfeiters* (1925), one of the main characters, Edouard, is a writer who works on the novel *Counterfeiters*. Edouard's dictum well illustrates Gide's interest in the process of writing: "if I don't succeed in writing the book, it'll be because the history of the book will have interested me more than the book itself."<sup>485</sup> Furthermore, Gide's book is supplemented with a journal in which he shares his writing experiences.<sup>486</sup> When Szentkuthy began to revise *Prae*, he must have already known the *Counterfeiters* quite well, since in the spring of 1930 he wrote his master's thesis on Gide.<sup>487</sup> Thus, the works of the French author might have been influential in the decision to incorporate critical remarks to the text of *Prae*.

Previous scholars have observed the fact that *Prae* is a novel about writing, but what they have failed to see is that the theme of writing falls within two categories. First, there are parts that may be interpreted as an exposition of Szentkuthy's *ars poetica*; second, there are also purely speculative ideas that were not realized in *Prae* (or it is difficult to determine if they were).

Let us start with an overview of the passages that can be interpreted as Szentkuthy's *ars poetica*, such as, for instance, Touqué's first article from chapter 1.<sup>488</sup> The article analyzes Touqué's writing process and shows how the idea of writing emerges when Touqué sees a hat in a shopping window in Paris, which prompts an argument with his girlfriend. The first step in Touqué's writing process is thus a visual and emotional impulse. There are several indications which suggest that Touqué's first article is actually an account of Szentkuthy's own writing method. Let me mention here just two examples. "I react to everything," says Szentkuthy, "in a sensitive way, like a seismograph. Sensual sensitivity—for example touch or visibility—is extraordinarily great and what I encounter influences me in a way that I want to record it immediately."<sup>489</sup> Elsewhere he said: "First and most strongly I am an impressionist; what is actually in front of me influences me."<sup>490</sup>

Chapter 1 also includes a passage in which Touqué reflects on the difference between "theme" (*téma*) and "development" (*kidolgozás*), which are Szentkuthy's terms for what the geneticists would call *plan* and *textualization*. Touqué declares that, in his writings, "theme" is never followed by "development," but it is included in the novel as such. As for "development," it never emerges from a pre-established "theme."<sup>491</sup> Exactly the same idea is repeated by the narrator in chapter 9.<sup>492</sup> We have seen that, as early as the period of *Robert*

<sup>485</sup> Gide, *The Counterfeiters*, 170.

<sup>486</sup> Gide, *Journal des Faux-monnayeurs*.

<sup>487</sup> *FH*, 226. In *Frivolities and Confessions* Szentkuthy recalls having discussed the question of the writer character with Gábor Halász (*FH*, 273). They compared Gide's novel to Huxley's *Point Counter Point* (1928), which also includes a character who is a novelist. Szentkuthy misquotes Huxley by saying that the point was to "put the novelist in the novel." In fact, in Huxley's novel it is not "the novelist" but "a novelist," that is, not necessarily the writer himself. Aldous Huxley, *Point Counter Point* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1963), 409.

<sup>488</sup> *P I*, 7–33.

<sup>489</sup> "Erzékenyen, szeizmográfyszerűen reagálok mindenre. Érzéki érzékenységem – például a tapintás meg a vizualitás is – szerfölött nagy, és ami elélem táru, az oly módon hat rám, hogy tüstént megörökítő kedvre serkent." *ÉF*, 68.

<sup>490</sup> "Elsősorban és legerősebben impresszionista vagyok, ami éppen az orrom előtt van, az hat." *FH*, 436.

<sup>491</sup> *P I*, 15–16

<sup>492</sup> *P II*, 53.

*Baroque*, Szentkuthy was unable to realize his plans for novels (see 3.2). Also, *Prae* includes numerous plans, or résumés of stories, which are never developed,<sup>493</sup> but unlike in *Robert Baroque*, in *Prae*, Szentkuthy defines this procedure not as a failure but as a positive element of his *ars poetica*.

Another important addition is the italicized *Interpolation* (addition 5), which is one of the most often quoted fragments from *Prae*. In that addition, Szentkuthy says that *Prae* can never fully describe the author's subjective experience, which he designates with the term *Non-Prae*. Although the author's experience is beyond representation, it can still be indirectly communicated: "*In the figure of Prae there must, therefore, be some sort of positive signal from which the tensile strength of the 'Non-Prae' that is constantly running in coexistence with the Prae can be made perceptible, deducible.*"<sup>494</sup> In *Interpolation*, Szentkuthy does not say how *Non-Prae* can be communicated but he returns to this topic in another addition, the *Leatrice and Halbert episode*. In the subchapter entitled *The cantus firmus of Non-word in the abundance of words*, Szentkuthy observes that, although subjective experience cannot be described with words, it can be implied by certain qualities of text, such as "abundance of words," or a "ridiculous accumulation of attributes."<sup>495</sup> These characteristics of the text divert the reader's attention away from the literal meaning of the words and indirectly communicate the writer's non-verbal experience, which Szentkuthy calls "Non-Word." Although Szentkuthy does not explicitly refer to the previously theorized relation between *Prae* and *Non-Prae*, based on the concepts' linguistic similarity, we can risk a hypothesis that the concept of *Non-Word* (*Nem-Szó*) is synonymous with *Non-Prae* (*Nem-Prae*). If our assumption proves correct, how *Non-Prae* can be conveyed in *Prae* becomes readily apparent: the author's experience is neither described nor named but it is *suggested* or *intimated* by stylistic characteristics of the text.

Finally, we must mention the famous and oft quoted addition 30, in which Szentkuthy presents his original theory about the spatial form of a novel. The first version of the theory was already written at stage 1. In chapter 7, in the middle of *Leatrice's* second memory, there is a longer comment about the function of retrospection.<sup>496</sup> In the passage, Szentkuthy says that the character's retrospection is not a representation of the past in the story, but only a trick to introduce a character in a new light. Thus, in fact, there is no narrative connection between the past and the present. Szentkuthy developed this thought in June of 1933 during

<sup>493</sup> Here is a list of the unrealized plans in *Prae*, some of which are presented as story plans or summaries of a story to be read by someone: Touqué's story about a prioress and a prince (*P I*, 12–14); Touqué's *Hagio-Parodia* (*P I*, 136–37); a crime story which Touqué found on a bus (*P I*, 269–70); *Queen I.*, *Queen II.*, *Statue and He*, a story in a journal called *Mind* (*P I*, 456–58); a story which *Leatrice* heard in Venice (*P I*, 514–15); a story about a cardinal's sister (*P II*, 8–11); Halbert's crime story *The Blessed Practical* (*P II*, 241); Péter's plan of a novel (*P II*, 250–53); a story about *Tilia's* sister (*P II*, 301–4); Halbert's father's plan of *Juanus Ethicus* (*P II*, 329–30); Halbert's father's plan of a story *Avido* (*P II*, 346–48); Halbert's father's plan of a story about Susan Fleming (*P II*, 353–57); *Adam and Eve*, a film which Halbert saw in Stuttgart (*P II*, 360–62); Halbert's father's plan of a story about a woman, a cardinal and a Genevian spy (*P II*, 407–9); Halbert's father's drama plan *Night of Innocence* (*P II*, 449–51).

<sup>494</sup> "A Prae alakjában is kell tehát valami olyan pozitív jeleknek lenniök, melyekből a Prae-vel állandó együttlétben futó 'Nem Prae' feszítő ereje megérezhető, kikövetkeztethető legyen." *P I*, 86. Trans. Tim Wilkinson (unpublished). Italics in the original.

<sup>495</sup> "Szóbőség," "a jelző nevétsége halmozása." *P I*, 508.

<sup>496</sup> PIM V. 5498/22/1/2, fol. 28r; *P I*, 473.

his revision of the manuscript. Around June 7<sup>th</sup>, he sketched an addition that he then wrote out on June 8<sup>th</sup> and probably attached to the manuscript at one go. Later, he crossed out the reflections in chapter 7. The addition can be found in the fifth chapter wherein Leatrice recalls events from her childhood in Russia. When her memories end, the narrator interferes only to disclose the shift in time as merely apparent: we might think we have just learned something about Leatrice's past but, in reality, the flashback was only an excuse to portray Leatrice in a different milieu. Relation between past and present, continues the narrator, is not temporal but spatial and one should think of the individual fragments of the novel as elements of a building that coexist simultaneously. With this theory, Szentkuthy seems to justify the fragmentary form of *Prae*, which consists of multiple memories that do not form a coherent narrative totality.

After these passages, which are all Szentkuthy's reflections on his method of writing, we should very briefly also mention those that consider novel writing but which still do not seem to be realized in *Prae*. Such is for instance Touqué's third and fourth article from chapter 1, which both theorize the future novel,<sup>497</sup> the distinction between "crystalline" (*kristályos*) and "gas-shaped" (*gáz alakú*) descriptions from addition 38,<sup>498</sup> and the discussion of the novelistic possibilities of describing Leatrice in chapter 9.<sup>499</sup> All of these fragments are less *ars poetica* than pure fantasies, but are probably also triggered by the reviewing process of the manuscript.

#### 4.4 Inadequate Editing: Additions 20 and 43

This section analyzes narrative incoherences in the relation of two additions (20 and 43) to the main text. The incoherences analyzed here might seem marginal, and it remains an open question—to be resolved by future research—whether a similar phenomenon can be found in other additions. Nevertheless, Dávid Szolláth's recent study on Szentkuthy's translation of *Ulysses* convinced me to include this analysis in my thesis.<sup>500</sup> Szolláth has convincingly shown that Szentkuthy's translation is highly incoherent and suffers from inadequate editing. This has led me to a hypothesis that perhaps inadequate editing might be considered a more general characteristic feature of Szentkuthy's writing process. Obviously, I am aware that the incoherences in *Prae* can be interpreted as elements of avant-garde or modernist poetics. However, the incoherent translation of *Ulysses* suggests that another interpretation is also possible: perhaps, when writing the additions, Szentkuthy did not remember well enough the text to which he attached them, and in the final process of revision he did not check carefully enough whether the whole text was coherent. Or, he simply did not notice the incoherences. If my hypothesis is correct, inadequate editing could be considered one of the principles of Szentkuthy's writing method. This inadequacy produces a text with modernist and even

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<sup>497</sup> *P I*, 37–41.

<sup>498</sup> *P I*, 371–78.

<sup>499</sup> *P II*, 7–53.

<sup>500</sup> Szolláth, "Leletmentés: Válogatott szentkuthyzmusok az *Ulysses* szövegében."

avant-gardist formal features, but, seen from an intentionalist point of view, it is possible that these features were not intentionally meant to be regarded as such in the first place.

Let me start by analyzing two examples of incoherence from addition 20. Written most likely in May of 1933, addition 20 was inserted at the beginning of chapter 5 (see Appendix 3, image 1 and 2: the main text and the first page of the addition).<sup>501</sup> In order to fully understand the context into which the addition was situated, we should start with recounting the events from chapter 2. At the beginning of chapter 2, Halbert and Anny are on their way to *Perspective* to see Leatrice. As the protagonists reach *Perspective*, they meet Touqué, who is waiting for Ena, who is together with Leatrice in the bathroom. When Leatrice comes out of the bathroom, Touqué introduces himself. Then, Leatrice lies down on her red couch and asks the gentlemen to go to the balcony for a moment. After some time, they come back to the apartment. As they enter the room, Leatrice starts to complain about her problems, whereas Touqué observes her wordlessly. The scene is then interrupted by Touqué's monologue, which amounts to nearly 170 pages (in the second edition) and includes half of chapter 2, as well as the entirety of chapters 3 and 4. After the long digression in chapter 5, we return to the scene in Leatrice's apartment. Leville-Touqué continues observing Leatrice. In the room, there is a fireplace on which there is a vase; above the fireplace there is a mirror. At one point Leatrice stands up, puts the vase on her lap, and sits on the mantelpiece. The moment when Leatrice sits on the mantelpiece is completed with an addition consisting of five small sheets of paper that will be now examined.<sup>502</sup> In the addition, Touqué observes and analyzes the image of Leatrice's back, which he sees reflected in the mirror. After the addition, in the main text, Leatrice jumps down from the mantelpiece and looks in the mirror. Then a discussion follows after which Leatrice finally leaves *Perspective* with Ena.

The main incoherence between addition 20 and the main text concerns the layout of Leatrice's room. In the main text, in front of the mirror, there are windows opening onto the sea, whereas, in the addition, the windows disappear and the mirror reflects nothing but a wall. Let us first consider how Szentkuthy describes Leatrice's room in the main text.

*Perspective* is first described at the beginning of chapter 2. Leatrice's room is situated on the first floor, over the bar. The furniture in the room is red. The room is narrow but long; it extends the whole length of the building's façade. The room has three floor to ceiling windows<sup>503</sup> and it is clear from the later descriptions in chapter 5 that the windows face the sea. When at one point Touqué looks around, he notices how fragments of the sea reflected through the windows fill the room.<sup>504</sup> Also, the description of the reflections in the mirror confirms that the windows open onto the sea. What Touqué sees in the mirror are reflections of the dark sea, the sun, and seagulls, which cannot be distinguished from the white crest of

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<sup>501</sup> Addition 23, which comes afterwards, was written on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of May 1933. Most probably, the additions were written in the course of correction. If this hypothesis is true, addition 20 must have been written before the 22<sup>nd</sup> of May.

<sup>502</sup> PIM V. 5498/22/I/1, fols. 46–50r. *P I*, 252–57. See Appendix 3, image 1 (the manuscript) and image 2 (the first page of the addition).

<sup>503</sup> *P I*, 50–51.

<sup>504</sup> When describing the sea reflections in the room, Szentkuthy compares them to corrections in the manuscript. This marginal comment was added probably during the correction. It must have been influenced by the image of Szentkuthy's own manuscript. *P I*, 262; PIM V. 5498/22/I/1, fol. 59r.

the waves.<sup>505</sup> When Leatrice looks into the mirror, she also sees the sea and the seagulls, which resemble white flowers.<sup>506</sup> And while she stares at her face in the mirror for a long time, her friends see her face in the mirror with the sea and the sky in the background.<sup>507</sup> Another fragment suggests that only one street divides *Perspective* from the sea. When Ena calls a taxi she asks the driver to park the car on the other side of the street.<sup>508</sup> When Leatrice leaves her room and goes downstairs with Ena, they cross the street but before entering the taxi they go down to the beach for a while.<sup>509</sup> Thus, *Perspective* must be located at the sea. Where exactly? Being a small one-floor building *Perspective* clearly cannot be located at the Croisette, the main boulevard where all the luxurious hotels are. However, in the Western part of Cannes, beyond the hill of the Old City, there is another boulevard, Boulevard du Midi, where a long row of low houses is separated from the beach only by one street. Thus, if *Perspective* was modeled after a real building in Cannes, it could have been one of the houses on Boulevard du Midi.

To conclude, there is no doubt that the windows in Leatrice's room open onto the sea. But in the 1933 addition, which completes the scene in *Perspective*, the mirror reflects nothing but the wall. The addition augments the brief moment when Leatrice is sitting on the mantelpiece and her back is reflected in the mirror. In the text of the addition, Touqué is looking at Leatrice's back in the mirror and he is analyzing the image he sees. A woman's back seen in a mirror also appears in Szentkuthy's other book, written after *Prae*, *Chapter on Love*, which might suggest that it was an important image for Szentkuthy.<sup>510</sup> In the scene in *Chapter on Love*, the protagonist sees a sculpture of a woman. He simultaneously sees her breasts in front of him and her back in the mirror. In *Prae*, Touqué is in the same position when he looks at Leatrice. According to the text of the addition, Touqué is in front of the mirror, so that he can see Leatrice, her back in the mirror, and all the things that are behind him and which he could not see without the mirror.<sup>511</sup> According to the layout of the room described in the main text, if Touqué is in front of the mirror, then the windows must be behind his back. Touqué should then see the landscape described in the main text: the sea and the seagulls. But in the addition, Touqué sees around Leatrice's back only the depth of the room. The mirror reflects the "deep image of the room" or "deepening space of the reflected room."<sup>512</sup> The windows thus clearly disappear. Touqué can also see the wall<sup>513</sup> and the objects in the room,<sup>514</sup> which include a lamp.<sup>515</sup> When the addition ends, Leatrice jumps down from the mantelpiece and looks into the mirror, which now again reflects the sea.<sup>516</sup>

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<sup>505</sup> *P I*, 251–52.

<sup>506</sup> *P I*, 257.

<sup>507</sup> *P I*, 261.

<sup>508</sup> *P I*, 294.

<sup>509</sup> *P I*, 303–4, 315.

<sup>510</sup> *FSZ*, 96.

<sup>511</sup> *P I*, 252–53.

<sup>512</sup> "Mély szobakép," "vetített szoba mélyülő tere." *P I*, 253.

<sup>513</sup> *P I*, 253, 256.

<sup>514</sup> *P I*, 255, 256.

<sup>515</sup> *P I*, 256.

<sup>516</sup> *P I*, 257.

Another incoherence between the addition and the main text concerns the pattern of the wallpaper. If Leatrice's room, says the narrator, were to be represented by a simple form, it would be a gigantic thermometer with some cherries inside. The cherries symbolize the red furniture, the thermometer glass represents the windows, and the Celsius lines stand for the stripes in the wallpaper.<sup>517</sup> Thus, it is clear that the wallpaper is striped. Yet, in the addition, the wallpaper has a flower pattern. First, the addition mentions "wallpaper flowers."<sup>518</sup> Next, after describing the view in the mirror, Szentkuthy goes on to talk about the flowers with "silent and dead petals" which are "stiff forever," which leaves no doubt that they are on the wallpaper.<sup>519</sup>

Let us see now the incoherences between addition 43 (the *Leatrice and Halbert episode*) and the main text. The addition continues after the end of Leatrice's memory of her first date with Halbert. Leatrice has thus left *Perspective*, moved into the hotel, and is recalling various events from her past. In the addition, Leatrice reflects on the nature of love and recalls the afternoon when she decided she would meet Halbert for the first time. At the end of her meditation, she "vaguely" recollects a dialogue between Halbert and Touqué about Halbert's father.<sup>520</sup> The word "vaguely" implies that their discussion took place long time ago. However, it is obvious from the preceding text that Leatrice has just met Touqué. At the beginning of the novel it is clear that Leatrice does not know Touqué, since she asks him who he is after which he introduces himself.<sup>521</sup> It is also clear that Touqué does not know her: when Leatrice asks him and Halbert to go out to the balcony, Halbert asks first, "what do you say about Leatrice?,"<sup>522</sup> after which Touqué asks him, "who is that Leatrice?"<sup>523</sup> When Leatrice leaves *Perspective* she says to Ena "that Leville is an interesting person,"<sup>524</sup> which also implies that she has just got to know him. We can assume that, when at the time Leatrice moved into the hotel, she had known Touqué for only several hours. It is thus impossible that she could remember Touqué's and Halbert's discussion from the past. The whole thing is even more complicated if we take into account the second part of *Prae*. There, both in the main text and in the additions, Touqué appears in Leatrice's memories of her past.<sup>525</sup> Thus, addition 43 is incompatible with part 1 (to which it is attached) but it would be theoretically compatible with part 2.

The second incoherence concerns Leatrice's stay in Italy. After a long analysis of two types of love (irrational and rational), Leatrice recalls a trip she took to Venice when she was young (she associates the water with irrationality and the houses with rationality).<sup>526</sup> Also in addition 44, Leatrice recalls her visit to Italy.<sup>527</sup> However, in chapter 2, Anny clearly states

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<sup>517</sup> *P I*, 262.

<sup>518</sup> "tapétavirágok." *P I*, 253.

<sup>519</sup> "néma és halott szirmait," "merevek voltak örökre." *P I*, 256.

<sup>520</sup> "Homályosan." *P I*, 504.

<sup>521</sup> "Ki maga?" *P I*, 65.

<sup>522</sup> "Mit szól Leatrice-hez?" *P I*, 66.

<sup>523</sup> "Kiféle, miféle ez a Leatrice?" *P I*, 68.

<sup>524</sup> "Te, ez a Leville érdekes ember." *P I*, 305.

<sup>525</sup> See for instance *P II*, 72 – 4, 99; additions 47 (*P II*, 39) and 49 (*P II*, 57).

<sup>526</sup> *P I*, 508–9.

<sup>527</sup> *P I*, 514–5.

that Leatrice has never been to Italy.<sup>528</sup> The way Anny analyzes Leatrice when talking with Halbert implies that she knows the Russian prostitute very well. When Leatrice moves out of *Perspective*, she says she will leave all her clothes there, after which she turns to Anny and says, “I’ll only take that hunter costume, you know.”<sup>529</sup> “You know” indicates that they are good friends. Thus, we have no reason to think that Anny is mistaken about Leatrice’s past: according to the main text Leatrice has never been to Italy.

The question that should now be posed is why Szentkuthy did not harmonize the additions with the main text. Why does the layout of the room and the wallpaper change? Why are there contradictory versions about the events from Leatrice’s past? There are two possible answers to these questions. One is that the incoherences are a positive element of Szentkuthy’s poetics. Another more plausible possibility is that the incoherences were simply due to Szentkuthy’s oversight. Let us consider this question with the example of incoherence that concerns the changing layout of the room.

If the mirror that reflects either the sea or the depth of the room was Szentkuthy’s conscious invention, we could regard *Prae* as a forerunner of the postmodern novel. Although they do not state it openly, many scholars seem to concur with such a view. Pál Nagy or Gintli and Schein, for instance, observe that *Prae* likes paradoxes and is often self-contradictory.<sup>530</sup> Others, such as Sipos, Grendel, or again Nagy, consider *Prae* a forerunner of the *nouveau roman*.<sup>531</sup> Indeed, the phenomenon of the changing layout of the room suits very well the definition of postmodern prose. Brian McHale has shown that the typical features of a postmodern novel are insoluble paradoxes and contradictions in the story world, objects and characters appearing only to be erased from the narrative, or events that did and did not take place. McHale calls this phenomenon “narrative self-erasure.”<sup>532</sup> Out of the many examples given by McHale, consider Robbe-Grillet’s *La Maison de rendez-vous* (1965).<sup>533</sup> One of the numerous incoherences of Robbe-Grillet’s novel occurs when the police tell the protagonist, Ralf Johnson, that Edouard Manneret has been killed. We can be sure that the police are not bluffing since Johnson already knows of Manneret’s death. Yet, after speaking with the policemen, Johnson goes to see Manneret, who is again alive.<sup>534</sup> The two events are incompatible and form an “impossible structure,”<sup>535</sup> or a “contradictory narrative,” as Brian Richardson names it.<sup>536</sup> Naturally, this incompatibility is not Robbe-Grillet’s error, but a conscious and positive element of his poetics. Robbe-Grillet uses a similar technique in his

<sup>528</sup> *PI*, 44.

<sup>529</sup> “Csak azt a vadászkosztümöt viszem magammal, tudod.” *PI*, 271.

<sup>530</sup> Nagy, *Az elérhetetlen szöveg*, 143–44; Gintli and Schein, “Szentkuthy Miklós,” 319–20; Gintli, “Szentkuthy Miklós,” 756.

<sup>531</sup> Sipos, “Prae: Dissémination et Montage du roman,” 127; Grendel, “Szentkuthy Miklós (1908–88),” 317; Nagy, *Az elérhetetlen szöveg*, 20.

<sup>532</sup> Brian McHale, *Postmodernist Fiction* (London: Routledge, 1987), 99–111.

<sup>533</sup> *Ibid.*, 109.

<sup>534</sup> Alain Robbe-Grillet, *La maison de rendez-vous* (Paris: Minuit, 1965), 94, 113.

<sup>535</sup> Bruce Morrisette, *The Novels of Robbe-Grillet* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1975), 248–49.

<sup>536</sup> Taking a more narratologically oriented perspective, Brian Richardson has shown what characterizes postmodern narratives is that they consist of logically incompatible parts. He mentions *La maison de rendez-vous* as a typical example. Brian Richardson, “Beyond Story and Discourse: Narrative Time in Postmodern and Nonmimetic Fiction,” in *Narrative Dynamics: Essays on Time, Plot, Closure, and Frames*, ed. Brian Richardson (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2002), 48.

movies, such as in *Le jeu avec le feu*, where the layout of a room (for instance, the position of a window) can change within one scene. From this perspective, the disappearing windows and the changing pattern of the wallpaper in Leatrice's room could be regarded as a case of "narrative self-erasure" prefiguring techniques common in postmodern novels.

However, what seems to me more probable, is that the incoherences in *Prae* may simply be due to the fact that Szentkuthy was reluctant to sufficiently edit the final text. The example of Proust shows very well that inept editing may produce inconsistencies in a text. When Proust died in 1922, the correction of the last parts of *In Search of Lost Time*, that is, *Prisonner* (1923), *Fugitive* (1925), and *Regained Time* (1927), was unfinished. As a result, the final volumes of his novel contain numerous incoherences. Let me give two examples from the *Prisonner*.

The first example concerns the writer Bergotte. At the end of the first part of the *Prisonner*, before the soirée at the Verdurins, Marcel says that he has heard about Bergotte's death. Then the details of his death are given: Bergotte goes to see an art exhibition and has a fit while looking at the fragment of yellow wall in Vermeer's picture.<sup>537</sup> But then, during the soirée, Charlus speaks with Marcel as if Bergotte was alive and asks Marcel to influence Bergotte to help Morel in his literary career.<sup>538</sup> The second example concerns doctor Cottard. When Marcel enters the house of the Verdurins, he is greeted by mister Verdurin, while at the same time Madame Verdurin talks with the doctor. Then during the party she explains Marcel that since she cannot listen Vinteuil's music without crying and in order to prevent her nose from running she must use an ointment prescribed by one of Cottard's students. When mentioning Cottard, Madame Verdurin expresses her condolences about his death. Later, during the soirée, the doctor reappears giving advice to general Deltour.<sup>539</sup> Both Bergotte and Cottard die once again in *Time Regained*.<sup>540</sup>

Apparently Bergotte and Cottard, being once dead and then again alive, follow the same pattern as Edouard Manneret in *La maison de rendez-vous*. However, what the genetic analysis shows is that both Bergotte's and Cottard's deaths were late additions, inserted by Proust to the third typescript of the *Prisonner* on which he was working in 1922 some months before his own death.<sup>541</sup> Proust died leaving the typescript unfinished, as a consequence of which the incoherences resulting from the late additions remained unsolved. When the *Prisonner* appeared for the first time, Proust's brother Robert and Jacques Rivière (Proust's publisher) corrected the incoherences and rewrote the text making Bergotte dead and Cottard alive. In order to give logical coherence to the text, they changed Charlus's words about Bergotte from present tense to imperfect and added a mention of Bergotte's death. They also deleted Madame Verdurin's words about Cottard's death.<sup>542</sup> The editors of the new *Pléiade* edition decided to sustain the incoherences but to point them out in footnotes. But, as Pierre-

<sup>537</sup> Marcel Proust, *La Prisonnière*, in *À la recherche du temps perdu* (Paris: Gallimard, 1988), 3:687–97.

<sup>538</sup> Proust, *La Prisonnière*, 3:725–26.

<sup>539</sup> Proust, *La Prisonnière*, 3:733, 746, 783.

<sup>540</sup> Marcel Proust, *Le Temps retrouvé*, in *À la recherche du temps perdu* (Paris: Gallimard, 1989), 4:278, 349.

<sup>541</sup> Proust, *La Prisonnière*, 3:1749. See also Alison Winton, *Proust's Additions: The Making of "À la recherche du temps perdu,"* vol. 2, *Table of additions* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), 153, 156.

<sup>542</sup> Marcel Proust, *La Prisonnière*, 3:1696; Marcel Proust, *À la recherche du temps perdu*, vol. 6, bk. 2, *La Prisonnière (Sodome et Gomorrhe III)* (Paris: NRF, 1924), 25–26, 53.



Louis Rey and Brian Rogers, the editors of *Le Temps Retrouvé* argue in their afterword, it would be a mistake to see the lack of coherence as a principle of Proustian aesthetics. If Proust had had more time, they claim, he would have corrected all the incoherences.<sup>543</sup>

We can see then that the same phenomenon—Manneret, Bergotte, and Cottard being first dead and then alive—is actually produced by two entirely different writing processes. It is vital to distinguish between a positive element of postmodern aesthetics and an error resulting from inept or careless editing. Now, the question is whether the changing layout of Leatrice's room is the case of Robbe-Grillet or Proust? Obviously, we cannot exclude the possibility that the incoherences might be a positive feature of Szentkuthy's poetics. It is possible to interpret the inconsistencies in *Prae* as a poetic device that prefigures postmodern aesthetics; or they might be seen as an attempt to convey distortions and uncertainties in human perception and memory, so typical of modernist prose. However, as I said earlier, a recent study by Dávid Szolláth has led me to a conclusion that another option is also possible. Szolláth has shown that Szentkuthy's translation of *Ulysses* is largely unedited, and hence incoherent.<sup>544</sup> For instance, the characters' names appear in different forms throughout the novel. Corny Kelleher appears sometimes as Cornell Kelleher, while J. J. O'Molloy at one point becomes J.J. O'Molly; at the beginning of Joyce's novel, James Fitzharris's nickname Skin-the-Goat is translated as "Gáláns Gida," while later he appears as "Kecskenyűző"; elsewhere Szentkuthy misreads "turnkey" as "turkney" and leaves the word "turkney," probably considering it a proper name, untranslated in the Hungarian text (for more examples see Szolláth's article). It is rather unlikely that these would be Szentkuthy's conscious translation solutions; more probably, we are dealing here with an author's unwillingness or inability to adequately edit his texts. In *Frivolities and Confessions*, Szentkuthy confirms this hypothesis by claiming that reading himself is "repulsive."<sup>545</sup> He admits that he did correct his works, but then "everyone in the house had to take andaxin,"<sup>546</sup> a common tranquillizer. He explains his repulsion in the following way: "What I find interesting is what is *in front* of me, not behind me,"<sup>547</sup> he says, "not a finished work, but what comes afterwards."<sup>548</sup> That is probably why he quickly forgets what he has written: "For the most part I don't even remember what I've written. My wife sometimes quotes a passage from my works, but I can't imagine that I could have written such a thing."<sup>549</sup> It is therefore clear that, for Szentkuthy, the act of editing was rather displeasing. Perhaps that is why he was happy to transfer the editing of his works to Mária Tompa when in 1978 she became his secretary.<sup>550</sup> When during the years 1980–82 Szentkuthy wrote *Bloody Donkey*, the ninth part of the *Saint Orpheus Breviary*, Tompa's tasks included, among other things: the division of overlong paragraphs into chapters, correction of obscure

<sup>543</sup> Pierre-Louis Rey and Brian Rogers, "Notice," in Marcel Proust, *À la recherche du temps perdu* (Paris: Gallimard, 1989), 4:1172.

<sup>544</sup> Szolláth, "Leletmentés: Válogatott szentkuthyzmusok az *Ulysses* szövegében."

<sup>545</sup> "Viszolygásom van magamat olvasni." *FH*, 345.

<sup>546</sup> "Mindenki andaxint szedett a házbán." *FH*, 345.

<sup>547</sup> "Az érdekel, ami *előttem* van, nem ami *mögöttem*." *FH*, 345. Italics in the original.

<sup>548</sup> "Engem nem a befejezett mű érdekel, hanem az, ami ezután következik." *ÉF*, 72.

<sup>549</sup> "Többnyire nem is emlékszem rá, hogy mit is írtam. Feleségem olykor-olykor idéz belőlük egy-egy passzust, és nekem eszembe se jut, hogy ez valaha belőlem sarjadt ki." *ÉF*, 72.

<sup>550</sup> *FH*, 345.

thoughts, or checking whether after the digression there is a return to the main story.<sup>551</sup> Now, let me risk a provocative thought: perhaps if Szentkuthy had a secretary while writing *Prae*, there would not be inconsistencies in the final text? Perhaps when in 1933 Szentkuthy revised the manuscript, he simply did not pay attention to the details? Perhaps he was so concentrated on his new ideas that after attaching the additions he did not check whether the whole text is coherent? The inconsistency of Szentkuthy's translation of *Ulysses* would suggest that such interpretation is possible. This is also suggested by what we know of Szentkuthy's attitude towards editing and rereading his own work, while there is no documented evidence that he would have used incoherence as a positive element. For the time being the question remains open until more documentary evidence is revealed.

## 4.5 Conclusions

In May of 1933, Szentkuthy thought *Prae* was finished, but in the course of correcting the text, inspired by new thematic material, he began to expand the manuscript with additions. As a result, the final text includes two thematically divergent layers: the main text and the additions. Future research will be able to take into account the layered structure of the novel. The analysis in this chapter has suggested that the additions might be treated as a set that is thematically uniform but which is different from the main text. If this hypothesis proves correct, in the future one could study the development of themes and ideas by comparing the two layers of the text. For instance, we have seen how Szentkuthy's philosophy of love changed in the course of his work on *Prae* (4.3.2). In the same way, we could also examine the development of other ideas in his novel. It will also be possible to investigate how particular additions relate to the given place in the main text. In this way, it will be possible to see how in the years 1933–34 Szentkuthy commented upon his earlier ideas. A list of additions provided in Appendix 2 will hopefully be a useful guideline for such research. This chapter has also shown the interesting case of additions 20 and 43, which remain in an incoherent relation to the main text. Recent studies on inconsistencies in Szentkuthy's translation of *Ulysses* might suggest that the incoherences in *Prae* are due to oversight and that inadequate editing might be considered a part of Szentkuthy's writing process. However, for the time being, this remains a speculation to be verified by future research.

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<sup>551</sup> The author's interview with Mária Tompa (7–29 October 2010, Budapest).

## 5 Obscuring Suppression

### 5.1 Introduction

The idea for the present chapter originates from Finnish geneticist Hanna Karhu's doctoral thesis on a Finnish symbolist poet, Otto Manninen. In her thesis, Karhu demonstrates that, in the spirit of symbolist poetics, Manninen suppressed crucial elements in the text of his poems in order to make them vague and elliptical.<sup>552</sup> This chapter analyzes a similar technique—"obscuring suppression," as I name it—in Szentkuthy's writing process. The technique of obscuring suppression consists in the suppression of avant-textual material, as a result of which the final text becomes on the one hand more concise but on the other hand vaguer and less understandable than the draft. In other words, images and ideas that in the *avant-texte* are detailed and clear become in the final text elliptic and obscure.

The technique of obscuring suppression can be analyzed from the perspective of style, as Karhu does in her dissertation. In that case, the research question would concern the mechanisms due to which a writer achieves his characteristic idiom. However, I would like to approach the problem from the perspective of (author-oriented) exegesis (for my theoretical presuppositions concerning author and exegesis, see the final paragraphs of 1.4). For all of the approaches that consider a text a reflection of a writer's vision (e.g., thematic, psychoanalytical, or biographical criticism) the discovery of the *avant-textes* will be crucial since, in the light of the drafts, images and ideas in *Prae* appear to be richer and more comprehensible.

This chapter analyzes two somewhat different cases of obscuring suppression in *Prae*. The first analysis (5.2) concerns drafts to a fragment that I have entitled according to its content *Development of pain*. The drafts include three similes that were suppressed in the final text, as a result of which the printed text is more elliptic and less vivid than the *avant-texte*. In section 5.3, I analyze the draft to *Interpolation* (addition 5), which presents a system of correspondences between various concepts, including a term from Heidegger's *Being and Time*. In the final text, however, Szentkuthy does not indicate how Heidegger's term relates to the previous argumentation. In effect, the function of the term in the text of *Prae* is unclear. Section 5.4 digresses on the technique of obscuring suppression in Flaubert's writing. Section 5.5 recapitulates the analysis and shows how its results can be used in future research on *Prae*. Since in the course of my research I have been able to find and fully analyze only two cases of obscuring suppression, it remains an open question to what extent the operation was typical of Szentkuthy. However, it cannot be excluded that the newly found material in PIM (see 2.1) might contain more drafts of *Prae*. If they turn out—as the two cases analyzed here—to be richer than the final manuscript, the analysis of *avant-textes* will help us to better understand the visions and ideas that Szentkuthy wanted to explore in *Prae*.

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<sup>552</sup> Karhu, *Säkeiden synty*, 227.

## 5.2 Development of Pain

This section analyzes drafts of a short passage from chapter 4 of *Prae*. The drafts contain three vivid similes that were suppressed from the final version. In effect, the printed passage is elliptic, whereas its *avant-texte* is more detailed and easier to comprehend.

Let us begin the analysis with a presentation of the phrase in the printed text. The phrase can be found in the middle of the chapter, much of which is devoted to a description of Leville-Touqué's literary project, the so-called *Antipsyché Idylls*. Touqué's goal is to develop a new narrative technique that would disrupt narrative continuity by associating successive events with different stories and images. The main story of the *Antipsyché Idylls* is very simple: after a concert, a man takes his coat from the cloakroom and sees a slim woman in the throng. Now, the action of retrieving a coat is associated with a man banging at a door of a hotel room where his lover committed suicide, whereas a slim woman brings to Touqué's mind a nocturnal landscape, a lake surrounded by bushes. Since both associations are very long (the first one takes 31 pages, the second one 17 pages), narrative continuity of the scene in the cloakroom is disrupted. The analyzed passage is in the first association. The association begins with a description of a scene in a hotel room. A man knocks at the door of a hotel room where his lover has shot herself. When the man realizes that his lover is dead, he experiences a pang of excruciating pain. The scene is followed by a longer discussion on the nature of pain. Szentkuthy observes that finding out about somebody's death makes us instantly withdraw into ourselves. However, he adds, there are also other types of pain. Sometimes, Szentkuthy says, pain is not sudden and it needs much time to develop and he devotes ten pages to an analysis of a slowly developing pain.

Szentkuthy gives the following example. When the woman we love leaves for a trip, the pain we experience after her departure does not appear instantly, but it develops little by little in our unconsciousness. We can neither control nor follow this process. It is only after some time that we are suddenly faced with the feeling of pain. What is strange about this feeling is that, after a long period of the unconscious development of a feeling, we cannot sense the connection between the emotion of pain and the woman's departure that has caused it. Szentkuthy's idea is perhaps easier to understand if we think of the process of falling in love. It is impossible to pin down the precise moment of the beginning of love because the process is to a great degree unconscious. Like pain, falling in love is a process that we cannot control and which gradually develops without our conscious participation. Once we are faced with the fully developed feeling of love, we are surprised that such a strong emotion could emerge from apparently insignificant meetings and conversations. Szentkuthy gives a series of analogies that illustrate this phenomenon. A truly creative scholarly work, we are told, is not a sum of data, but a spontaneously emerging concept which is based on the data but which goes beyond it and does not resemble it anymore. The same goes for flowers in a garden: in order to grow they need sunshine and rain, but when they are already developed, one can recognize neither the sun nor the rain in their form. Another example is the development of a child in a mother's womb. A child is begotten in one moment of time, after which its father can neither see nor control its development. When the father faces the newborn child, he finds it difficult

to see the relation between the child and his love for the child's mother. Szentkuthy's analysis is summarized in table 4.

**Table 4** Analogies to development of pain

initial point	process of development	result which does not resemble the initial point
woman's departure	slow and unconscious development	feeling of pain
data	processing the data	scholarly work
wind, sun, rain	growing	flower
conception	development in mother's womb	newborn child

After the list of analogies we encounter the following phrase:

Love and pain act out the same comedy: for a while its actors jump about and gesticulate on the upper plane of the narrative, but in an unexpected moment a small millimeter-sized piece falls from the stage (which is insulated from the magnetic life center), whereupon the life center immediately seizes the freshly liberated particle (for instance, that the "woman is about to leave" or the fertilizing semen): in vain will one once again wall up the surface stage with the insulator, in order to cut it off in it secretly from the central magnetic life force, the piece once pinched off from above blossoms for its own sake, and once all of a sudden it will reach out its rich and alien branches over the stage's isolating wall up to the actors' surprised forehead, that is, Don Juan will encounter a child who has no conceivable connection with his love narrative, and the man overpowered by the valedictory pain will encounter A Pain which bears no resemblance to the woman, nor to their relationship, nor to anything, being a surprising ready creation from an unknown workshop, but nevertheless addressed to him.<sup>553</sup>

Before I analyze the drafts, let me first explain the above-quoted fragment. The words "life" (*élet*) and "narrative" (*epika*) have specific meanings in this part of *Prae*. "Life" refers here to the unconscious, while "narrative" designates the conscious and the communicable sphere of the human psyche. The passage describes the following situation: first, a painful experience leaves its mark on the unconscious (which is also referred to as a "life center" or "central magnetic life force"). This process is described as if a piece of something has fallen off a theater stage. Next, the piece develops ("blossoms") unbeknownst to us. Finally, the unconscious returns the fully developed feeling of pain to the "actors" on the "upper floor of the narrative," which is, simply speaking, our consciousness. The actors (consciousness) are surprised to encounter a fully developed pain because it has been developing without their participation. The meaning of the quoted fragment is therefore that we can neither control nor

<sup>553</sup> "Szerelem és fájdalom ugyanazt a komédiát játsszák végig: egy ideig ágálnak és ugrálnak a szereplői az epika felső síkjában, de egy váratlan pillanatban erről a (az élet mágnetikus középpontjától elszigetelt) színpadról lehull egy milliméternyi darabka, mire az élet centruma az éppen felszabadult részecskét rögtön magához ragadja: hiába falazzák be a felszíni színpadot újból a szigetelőanyaggal, hogy így benne titkosan elvágják az élet központi vonzóerejétől, az az egyszer fönről lecsipett darab öncélúan virágzik, és egyszer csak visszanyújtja gazdag és idegen ágait a színpad szigetelő-fala fölé a szereplők meglepett homlokába, vagyis Don Juan szembetalálja magát egy gyermekkel, melynek semmi képzelhető összefüggése sincs az ő szerelmi epikájával, és a búcsúzás fájdalmától elkábult férfi szembetalálja magát Egy Fájdalommal, mely semmit sem hasonlít sem a nőhöz, sem a viszonyukhoz, sem semmihez, hanem meglepetésszerű kész kreáció ismeretlen műhelyből, mégis neki címezve." *P I*, 200–201.

fully understand our emotions. They take on a life of their own and can develop inside of us without our conscious participation. When we are faced with such developed emotions, they always surprise us because we cannot see the clear connection between such emotions and the events that caused their development.

This passage might have been inspired by Szentkuthy's feelings towards Mária Hercz, who became his lover in April of 1932 on the way from Zürich to Budapest.<sup>554</sup> The text of *Prae* speaks of the beloved woman who leaves to Rigi, which is a mountain in the Alps. It is very likely that the woman who leaves for Rigi is modeled on Mária Hercz. Two pieces of evidence confirm this hypothesis. Firstly, some folios later, on the verso of a fragment of the *Antipsyché Idylls*, Szentkuthy notes that the text was written in July of 1932, after Mária Hercz's departure for Switzerland (see notes to addition 14 in Appendix 2). Secondly, in the PIM archive, there is a letter from Mária Hercz to Szentkuthy written on a headed notepaper of Hotel Rigi First and sent from Rigi on 2 August 1931 (one year before the *Antipsyché Idylls* were written). In her letter, Hercz writes that she is staying in a room she has known for a long time, which implies that Rigi might have been a usual place for her to stay in the summer.<sup>555</sup>

As for the strange expression “in it secretly” (*benne titkosan*), which sounds clumsy in Hungarian also, it is most likely the typesetter's error. The same phrase in the manuscript is as follows: “in order to cut it off hermetically from the central magnetic life force,” which would make sense, since “hermetically” clearly refers to the “insulator.” Now, in the manuscript, the word *hermetikusan* (“hermetically”) is divided, so that one line ends with *herme* (“herme”) and the next one begins with *tikusan* (“tically”).<sup>556</sup> The divided word should have been hyphenated but after *herme* there was no space and the hyphen is missing. The typesetter must have misread the words in the manuscript, so that in the printed version *herme* became *benne* (“in it”) and *tikusan* became *titkosan* (“secretly”). The segment *herme* squeezed at the end of the line may easily be read as *benne*. As for *tikusan*, it requires some imagination to read as *titkosan*, since obviously there is no second *t*, and *u*, which Szentkuthy always indicated as *ű* (*u* with a breve), is clearly readable. Still, the most logical guess is that, after rendering *herme* as *benne*, the typesetter must have interpreted *tikusan* as *titkosan*. The proofs of this passage have not survived but the most logical deduction would be that, when going through them, Szentkuthy did not notice the error.

The quoted fragment is one long, complex, compact, and rather elliptic sentence that is not easy to understand at first reading. However, in the light of its *avant-texte*, the passage appears to convey a vision that is clear and fully understandable. The manuscript of *Prae* contains some minor corrections but the present analysis will focus only on the drafts to this fragment, which can be found in the dossier PIM V. 5498/23. The drafts are written on a sheet of paper (numbered as 1) folded twice in half, which gives us four folios numbered from 1 to 4. The material for our phrase can be found on folios 1 and 4. In the draft to folio 2 (and partially on folio 1), a fragment of a phrase from the following page (*P I*, 202) is sketched.

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<sup>554</sup> *FH*, 373–74.

<sup>555</sup> Mária Hercz to Szentkuthy, 2 August 1931.

<sup>556</sup> PIM V. 5498/22/I/1, fol. 161r.

The draft to folio 3 does not have a corresponding fragment in *Prae*, but Szentkuthy might have wanted to use it for the passage on pages *P I*, 205–8. All in all, the drafts to folios 2 and 3 do not include much suppressed material and thus are less significant from our perspective.<sup>557</sup> This section will only analyze the drafts to folios 1 and 4 (see drafts 1 and 2 below).

Before we begin the analysis, it should be mentioned that these drafts are in many ways unique. In a 1981 interview, Szentkuthy claimed that he does not have to work on his phrases because what he writes down is already a fair copy. He said: “what comes out of me are already formed phrases.”<sup>558</sup> While this might be true of Szentkuthy’s late period, the drafts clearly contradict his claim by showing how phrases from *Prae* have been sketched and reworked. The drafts are exceptional since I have not been able to find any other documents showing how Szentkuthy worked on the level of phrases. Nevertheless, this does not mean that there could not have been other similar drafts. Perhaps Szentkuthy’s method was similar to that of Zola, who preserved the general plans and the fair copies but most likely destroyed all the rough copies of his novels.<sup>559</sup>

If we now have a look at drafts 1 and 2, we will find that they present much more vivid and much more intelligible material than the final version. Since in the case of the present drafts the spatial arrangement of the words is of no importance for our interpretation, the translation of the drafts is presented linearly. Below is a translation of draft 1 (PIM V. 5498/23/1, fol. 1; see Appendix 3, image 3); it does not include the Latin fragment. The second part of the draft is entirely crossed out in the original. The words crossed out are marked by a ~~striketrough~~; the words added between the lines are marked by <brackets>.

but in an unexpected moment falls from the platform’s

which is surrounded and protected by an insulating wall as if it were ~~life lurking below and as in the pose of a~~  
wild animal watching for prey ~~observing~~

radiating from the depths against the magnetic ~~central~~ attraction of life. As a matter of fact what we deal with is a two-storied medieval stage, where the upper paradise floor ~~is substituted by~~ the world of “narrative,” while ~~this~~ <below> hell grade <is substituted by> the magnetic empire of “life,” which <the latter> would like to draw the upper stage to itself. This, however, usually does not succeed: the force of the depth cannot break through the isolation of the “narrative.” However, sometimes a ~~splinter~~ <small piece> falls off the insulating material and then life – which has observed it like a wild animal watching for prey

<sup>557</sup> Folio 2 contains material for a phrase that describes a departing train (*P I*, 202). The draft points out that there is a difference between a moving man or an animal, and a moving train. This antithesis has not been used in the final text. The main idea in folio 3 is that in the Baroque theater the stage design was two-dimensional: it was built with perspective already included. Szentkuthy might have wanted to use this idea in the analysis on pages *P I*, 205–8 which describes a man sitting on a cathedral façade, and which contains numerous references to the question of perspective.

<sup>558</sup> “Megformált mondatok pattannak ki belőlem.” *ÉF*, 69.

<sup>559</sup> Grésillon, *La mise en oeuvre*, 151–53.

Next follows a translation of draft 2 (PIM V. 5498/23/1, fol. 4; see Appendix 3, image 4), also linear; the translation does not include the final fragment in Latin. It is uncertain whether “Absentia vitae” refers to the Latin fragment or whether it is the subject (“it”) of the preceding phrase.

~~and once all of a sudden~~, the branches of the tree in leaf outgrow the dark walls of the lower (life-) stage and reach out as an unexpected gift their proud blossoms to the world of narrative too: what fell out of it unnoticed as a narrative ~~mors~~ splinter, now – spreading its gigantic foliage from the burning soil of life, intrudes itself as it were as a selfish intercalation ~~<up>~~ back upon the world of the narrative.

on the closed plane of the “narrative” above itself – it immediately takes hold of the infinitesimal ~~morsel~~ ~~<splinter>~~ which got within its reach after falling through momentary insulation-~~opening~~ ~~<split>~~

Absentia vitae

Now, the point of our analysis is to show that the drafts contain much richer material than the final version of the same passages in *Prae*. More precisely, the *avant-texte* includes three important similes that were suppressed in the final text.

1. *Medieval theater*. In the printed text, our life is compared to a stage, while a painful experience impressed upon our unconscious is compared to an object that falls off the stage. In the drafts, this image is expanded and vivified. In draft 1, Szentkuthy compares the situation to a “two-storied medieval stage” (*középkori emeletes-színpad*), where the upper floor symbolizes paradise and the lower floor symbolizes hell, which constantly wants to invade paradise. The paradise floor is therefore the level of conscious experiences, while the hell floor that lurks beneath it, is the level of the unconscious.

2. *Predator*. In the final text, “life,” that is, the unconscious, is depicted as an impersonal element (“magnetic life center,” or “magnetic life force”) which seizes the particle that falls off the stage. In the *avant-texte*, however, the unconscious is compared to a “wild animal” (*vadállat* or *vad*) “lurking for a victim” (*predáralasó*) that has been “observing” (*figyelő*) or “eyeing” (*fixálta*) the upper stage. This simile has been entirely suppressed. Only the verb “seizes” (*magához ragadja*) retains traces of this image.

3. *Tree*. The printed text says that an object fallen from the stage first “blossoms for its own sake,” and finally reaches out its “rich and alien branches over the stage’s isolating wall up to the actors’ surprised forehead.” Again, the draft version is more vivid. In draft 2, it turns out that the branches belong to a “tree in leaf” (*lombosodó fa*). They “outgrow the dark walls of the lower (life-) stage” (*túlnőnek az alsó színpad (élet-) sötét falain*), and “spreading” (*terebélyesedve*) their “gigantic foliage” (*óriási lomb*), return their “blossoms” (*virágjaikat*) back to consciousness. Furthermore, the draft characterizes this process as “selfish intercalation” (*önző interkaláció*), while the tree is said to “intrude itself back upon the world of the narrative” (*visszatolakszik (...) az epika világába*), which emphasizes the fact that the work of the unconscious happens independently of consciousness.



de egy váratlan pillanatban lehull ennek  
a platformnak

Identitas  
Radicalis  
Motus ac  
Spatium  
Vivum

! [mely mintegy szigetelő, fallal  
van körülvevve] az alatta  
lappangó élet és prédára-  
leső vadállat pózabanként  
figyelő

mélyből sugárzó az élet mágnetikus  
középponti vonzása  
ellen. Tulajdonképpen  
egy olyan középkori emeletes-színpadról  
van szó, amelynél a felső paradicsom-  
emeletet az “epika” világa helyettesíti,  
az alatta lévő  
viszont a pokol-grádust az “élet”  
helyettesíti utóbbi  
mágneses birodalma, amely szeretné  
a felette levő színpadot magához von-  
zani. Ez azonban általában nem  
sikerül: az “epika” izolációján nem  
tud áthatolni a mélység ereje. Néha  
darabka  
azonban mégis lehull egy szilánk a  
a szigetelőanyagból és akkor az élet –  
mely prédáraleső vadként fixálta

9 65 | 10 41  
76

**Draft 1** First draft to *Development of pain* (PIM V. 5498/23/1, fol. 1), see Appendix 3, image 3<sup>560</sup>

<sup>560</sup> The draft is written in black ink except for the Latin text, which is written in green ink. The Latin text on the left side is a draft of a Latin sentence on the next page: “transfloreatio hiccitatis intentionalis seu de identitate Motu ac Spatii: stabilitas est spatium virtuale, ac Motus semper idem spatium est, sed vivans.” *P I*, 202. The transcription of the phrase “Spatium Vivum” is conjectural.

és egyszer csak, a lombosodó fa  
 ágai túlnőnek az alsó (élet-) szín-  
 pad sötét falain és átnyújtják,  
 váratlan ajándékként, büszke vi-  
 rágjaikat az epika világába is:  
 ami epikai ~~morz~~ szilánkként hullt  
 ki észrevétlenül belőle, most – az  
 élet égő talajából óriási lombbá tere –  
 bélyesedve, mintegy visszatolakszik,  
 önző interkaláció képen, az epika  
 világába.

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az “epika” zárt emeletén maga  
 fölött – az éppen keze ügyébe eső  
 infinitezimális ~~morzsát~~ mely a  
 a pillanatnyi szigetelés-nyíláson ke-  
 resztülesett, rögtön hatalmába keríti  
 Absentia vitae

ars est  
~~natura in~~ realitatis  
~~ars komposita est~~  
 naturae  
 ars est imago reflectum  
~~natae in~~ mirrore  
 in unda fugae:

**Draft 2** The second draft to *Development of pain* (PIM V. 5498/23/1, fol. 4), see Appendix 3, image 4<sup>561</sup>

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<sup>561</sup> The draft is written in black ink except for the Latin text, which is written in pencil. The Latin text below was not used in *Prae*.

The present analysis shows that Szentkuthy's original vision was clear and almost cinematic. There is a medieval stage that consists of two floors. The upper floor represents paradise—this is the level of our consciousness. On the lower floor, the unconscious lurks like a predator and observes the events above, ready to strike at any moment. Suddenly, a piece of our life falls off the upper stage and is immediately seized by a predator. The captured piece is a seed from which a gigantic tree rises. The tree outgrows the dark walls of the lower stage and willfully spread its branches, with leaves and blossoms, up to the surprised characters on the upper stage. However, in the course of working on the text, important elements of the scene were lost or rather, excised. In effect, the final text presents an image that is more concise and less vivid than it is in the *avant-texte*. In *Frivolities and Confessions* Szentkuthy refers to his writing method as “narrowing” (*szűkítés*).<sup>562</sup> He recalls that, already in his childhood, he had been fascinated by the way El Greco condensed many figures into a small space in his paintings. As an example, he mentions *Descent of the Holy Spirit*.<sup>563</sup> In *A Harmonious Ripped Soul*, Szentkuthy also mentions the compact composition of El Greco's paintings as one the main sources of his poetics.<sup>564</sup> Unfortunately, Szentkuthy does not say how the method of narrowing looks in practice, but it is very probable that he refers to the procedure analyzed in this section: deleting of elements of *avant-texte* and condensing all material into one compact sentence. Naturally, one can also read *Prae* without knowing the *avant-textes*. However, read in the light of its drafts the phrase becomes more vivid, and we can better understand Szentkuthy's vision. In this way, the *avant-text* increases our knowledge of *Prae*.

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<sup>562</sup> *FH*, 611.

<sup>563</sup> *FH*, 610–11.

<sup>564</sup> Szentkuthy, *Harmonikus tépett lélek*, 39–40, 43.

### 5.3 Interpolation

This section analyzes the draft to addition 5. The text of the addition contains a Heideggerian term whose function in the argumentation is not clear; for this reason, it seems to be only a stylistic embellishment. However, analysis of the draft shows that, originally, the term had a precisely determined place in Szentkuthy's system of analogies.

Addition 5, which Szentkuthy calls *Interpolation*, is one of *Prae*'s most famous fragments.<sup>565</sup> The main theme of the addition is the relation of *Prae*—that is, Szentkuthy's book—to *Non-Prae*—that is, the emotions, experiences, and dreams that Szentkuthy failed to express in the text of *Prae* (this is how Szentkuthy specifies the terms in draft 4). The italicized text of the addition interrupts the beginning of *Touqué's monologue* in chapter 2. The addition begins with a statement that all analyses presented in the text of *Prae* are incapable of fully expressing the author's ideas and emotions. For instance, the preceding analysis of adolescent love (which *Interpolation* interrupts) fails to express what Szentkuthy actually wants to say. "*Was that the essence of the adolescent love about which one could read?*" asks the narrator, who immediately answers "*No.*"<sup>566</sup> Thus, *Prae* is incapable of expressing the author's true experiences:

*If the title of this writing as a whole is Prae, does Prae say anything about what it wants? No, it does not. It does not even come anywhere close to itself. The same thing happens here as with the apprehensively penitent: as they pronounce the name of the sin, its place, the number of times, they immediately feel it is untruthful, so unaccustomed is the limited atmosphere of the "truth" after the infinitely extended nothingness of "life."*<sup>567</sup>

As we can see in the draft to *Interpolation*, "life," that is, all the things that are not expressed in the text, is designated with the name *Non-Prae*. But, for Szentkuthy, it is not enough to claim that life cannot be expressed in literature. What he envisions is that, paradoxically, the inexpressible should somehow be included in the novel. The following fragment is so famous in Szentkuthy scholarship that it is worth quoting it in its entirety.

*"Life is inexpressible"—for everyone that is an intolerable commonplace. But the massive concreteness of the "inexpressibility" can be expressed, and a form of expression of this kind, it so happens, would be the polar opposite of a commonplace, because never yet has it been done radically. Running behind the text of Prae, beside it and around it, is an organic accompanying stream, the "Non-Prae," inseparable from Prae, which, unlike the temporary episodes of the above-mentioned oscillator, is a finite counterpart, complement, fellow balance-pan, or metaphorical arc of commentary to Prae.*

*What exists, which is to say Prae itself, is a continual blunder, institutionalized prevarication ["truths"]; what is truly exciting, interesting, the one true faith or the actual, by its very nature lies outside any epic, and*

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<sup>565</sup> *P I*, 84–87.

<sup>566</sup> "*Az volt-e a kamaszkori szerelem lényege, amit itt olvasni lehetett? Nem.*" *P I*, 85. Trans. Tim Wilkinson (unpublished). Italics in the original.

<sup>567</sup> "*Ha ennek az egész iratnak Prae a címe: szól-e hát a Prae arról, amiről akar? Nem. Meg se közelíti önmagát. Ugyanaz történik itt, mint az aggályosan gyónóknál: ahogy kiejtik a bűn nevét, helyét, számát, rögtön hazugságnak érzik, mert oly szokatlan az 'igazság' korlátolt légköre az 'élet' végtelenre feszült semmije után.*" *P I*, 85. Trans. Tim Wilkinson (unpublished). Italics in the original.

that is the inaccessible, the “Non-Prae,” which bears the same relation to Prae as a tautened bow string does to the arched shaft of the bow. On statues of Eros the figure of Eros is sometimes shown holding a marble bow; this has no bowstring, to be sure, but the bow is nevertheless arched in such a way that the viewer cannot fail to imagine the non-existent string as being there. In the figure of Prae there must, therefore, be some sort of positive signal from which the tensile strength of the “Non-Prae” that is constantly running in coexistence with Prae can be made perceptible, deducible. Principle: to utilize the essential impotence of literature with productive optimism as a useful structural factor: to make the constant ghostly absence and its continuo of otherness a harmonious component, to incorporate the “Non-Prae” into a work’s preserve in much the same way as in the Pantheon there also used to be an altar to the “unknown gods.”<sup>568</sup>

In *Interpolation*, Szentkuthy does not say how he wishes to incorporate the inexpressible in his novel, but elsewhere, he suggests that it can be done with the help of formal features of the text: style, accumulation of attributes, long monologues, may convey, in an indirect way, the experience which would otherwise be inexpressible.<sup>569</sup>

After these reflections, Szentkuthy gives two comparisons that are supposed to illustrate the relation of *Prae* to *Non-Prae*: the first is “from architecture,” and the second “from phenomenological Roman Catholic theology,”<sup>570</sup> as the title of the passage says. In the first example, Szentkuthy describes a black marble baptistry in the shape of a clover with protruding green metal clovers. In the wall next to the baptistry, there is a gigantic window, also in the shape of clover (the same baptistry appears later in *Black Renaissance* as Brunelleschi’s project).<sup>571</sup> The analogy is the following: the baptistry stands for *Prae*, while the gigantic window symbolizes the inexpressible *Non-Prae*. The second example (from “modern phenomenological theology”) is very brief and concludes the whole addition:

*If we want to put this well in quick relation to modern phenomenological theology, we must see in the well the duality “in-über”: the disparation of things into concentric identity-essence [“in”] and into alterity rings directed beyond themselves vanishing away in transcendent circles [“über”]. [L. Brehle, “Heidegger’sche »Sich-vorweg-im-schon-sein-in« und Neue Sachlichkeit: Nichts als Sache”. Marburg. 1933.]<sup>572</sup>*

<sup>568</sup> “‘Az élet kifejezhetetlen’: mindenki számára tűrhetetlen közhely. De a ‘kifejezhetetlenség’ nagy konkrétumát ki lehet fejezni, és egy ilyen kifejezési forma éppenséggel ellentéte lenne a közhelynek, mert radikálisan még nem csinálták meg soha. A Prae szövege mögött, mellette és körülötte állandóan fut egy organikus kísérőfolyam, a Prae-től elválaszthatatlan ‘Nem-Prae,’ amely a fent említett oszcillátor ideiglenes epizódjaival szemben egy végleges párja, kiegészítője, serpenyő-társa vagy metafizikai komplementär-íve a Prae-nek. Ami megvan, vagyis maga a Prae, állandó melléfogás, intéményes félrebeszélés [‘igazságok’]; ami valóban izgalmas, érdekes, egyedül üdvöztető vagy aktuális, az természeténél fogva kívül esik minden epikán, az a megközelíthetetlen, a ‘Nem-Prae,’ amely úgy viszonylik a Prae-hez, mint egy íj feszítő húrja az íj hajlott nád ívéhez. Amor-szobrokon Amor néha márványját tart a kezében, melyem nincs ugyan húr, de a márványív mégis úgy van ívelve, hogy az ember okvetlenül odaérzi a nem-létező hűrt: a Prae alakjában is kell tehát valami olyan pozitív jeleknek lenniök, melyekből a Prae-vel állandó együttlétben futó ‘Nem-Prae’ feszítő ereje megérezhető, kikövetkeztethető legyen. Elv: az irodalom lényegi impotenciáját felhasználni termékeny optimizmussal, mint hasznos szerkesztési tényezőt: az állandó hiány-kísérletet és másság-kontinuút pozitív harmónia-alkatrésszé tenni, a ‘Nem’-et éppúgy belevonni a mű területébe, ahogy a Pantheonban is volt pozitív oltára az ‘ismeretlen istennek.’” P I, 86. Trans. Tim Wilkinson (unpublished). Italics in the original.

<sup>569</sup> P I, 507–8. See 4.3.3.

<sup>570</sup> “Építészetből,” “fenomenologista katolikus hittudományból.” P I, 84.

<sup>571</sup> SZOB I, 222. Miklós Szentkuthy, “Excerpt from *Black Renaissance*,” 260.

<sup>572</sup> “Ha az említett kutat gyors rokonságba akarjuk nevelni a modern fenomenologista teológiával, akkor a kútban az “in-über” kettőséget kell látnunk: a dolgok szétszakadását koncentrikus azonosság-magra [“in”] és transzcendens körökbe távolodó, önmagából ki- és elvezető mássággyűrűkre [“über”]. [L. Brehle,

The example above is supposed to illustrate the relation of *Prae* to *Non-Prae* but it is more obscure than elucidating. Szentkuthy first relates the opposition of *Prae* and *Non-Prae* to the German terms “in” and “über.” This could be understood in the following way: what is beyond the text, that is, *Non-Prae* could be seen as being *over* (“über”) the text of *Prae*. But what is the meaning of the title of the non-existent book to which Szentkuthy refers? Does the term *Sich-vorweg-im-schon-sein-in* relate somehow to *Prae* and *Non-Prae*? At first sight the term might seem only linguistic embellishments devoid of any sense; at least such is Gyula Rugási’s stance when he argues that Szentkuthy’s references to philosophy in *Prae* cannot be taken seriously. According to Rugási, the presence of Heidegger’s name in *Prae* is only a “play, humbug,” and “ornament,”<sup>573</sup> and all the German terms in *Prae* are only a “bluff.”<sup>574</sup> Rugási’s argument is based on his conversation with Szentkuthy during which the writer called *Being and Time* “stupid, bubbling nonsense.”<sup>575</sup> It is true that in the last years of his life Szentkuthy became very hostile towards German philosophy. In *Canonized Despair* he speaks of Heidegger and Husserl contemptuously as authors of “ornamental word fetishes”<sup>576</sup> while in *Frivolities and Confessions* he rejects Heidegger’s philosophy because it “does not speak about our everyday life’s sufferings and experiences.”<sup>577</sup> He also renounces any serious interest in Heidegger, by claiming that *Prae* was not supposed to be philosophy but a caricature of philosophy.<sup>578</sup> Yet, it should not be forgotten that *Frivolities and Confessions* was an interview given fifty years after *Interpolation* was written. And, in 1969, Szentkuthy said he liked “Heidegger’s crafty wisdoms.”<sup>579</sup> Most probably then, Mária Tompa is right when she points out that Szentkuthy’s opinion on philosophy changed at one point in his life.<sup>580</sup> Tompa’s point becomes obvious, if we look carefully into the draft of *Interpolation*. The draft contains evidence that clearly contradicts Rugási’s view. The document shows that the German term had a precise place in Szentkuthy’s system of analogies, which included the pair *Prae* and *Non-Prae*, modern architecture, Erich Przywara’s theology, and Heidegger’s philosophy.

Let us begin the analysis by observing that the idea of looking for analogies between life, art, philosophy and science has always been at the core of Szentkuthy’s thinking. Szentkuthy owes the idea of the underlying unity of the universe to Paracelsus, a Renaissance physician, philosopher of nature, and alchemist, who in his theoretical writings pursued a search of correspondences between astronomy, chemistry, and medicine. Paracelsus’s philosophy, as Szentkuthy puts it, “expresses the idea that an organ of mine, or a chemical substance and the

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“Heidegger’sche »Sich-vorweg-im-schon-sein-in« und Neue Sachlichkeit: Nichts als Sache”. Marburg. 1933.]” *PI*, 87. Italics in the original.

<sup>573</sup> “Játék, humbug,” “decorum.” “Szentkuthy Miklós a fiatalok olvasatában: Kerekasztal-beszélgetés Szentkuthy Miklós könyvtárában 1992. szeptember 12-én” [Miklós Szentkuthy read by the young people: Round table discussion in Miklós Szentkuthy’s library on 12 September 1992], in Tompa, *Égő katedra*, 193.

<sup>574</sup> Rugási, “Leatrice görög arca,” 312.

<sup>575</sup> “Hülye, bugyborékoló marhaság.” Tompa, *Égő katedra*, 192.

<sup>576</sup> “Ornamentális szófétisek.” *SZOB III*, 271.

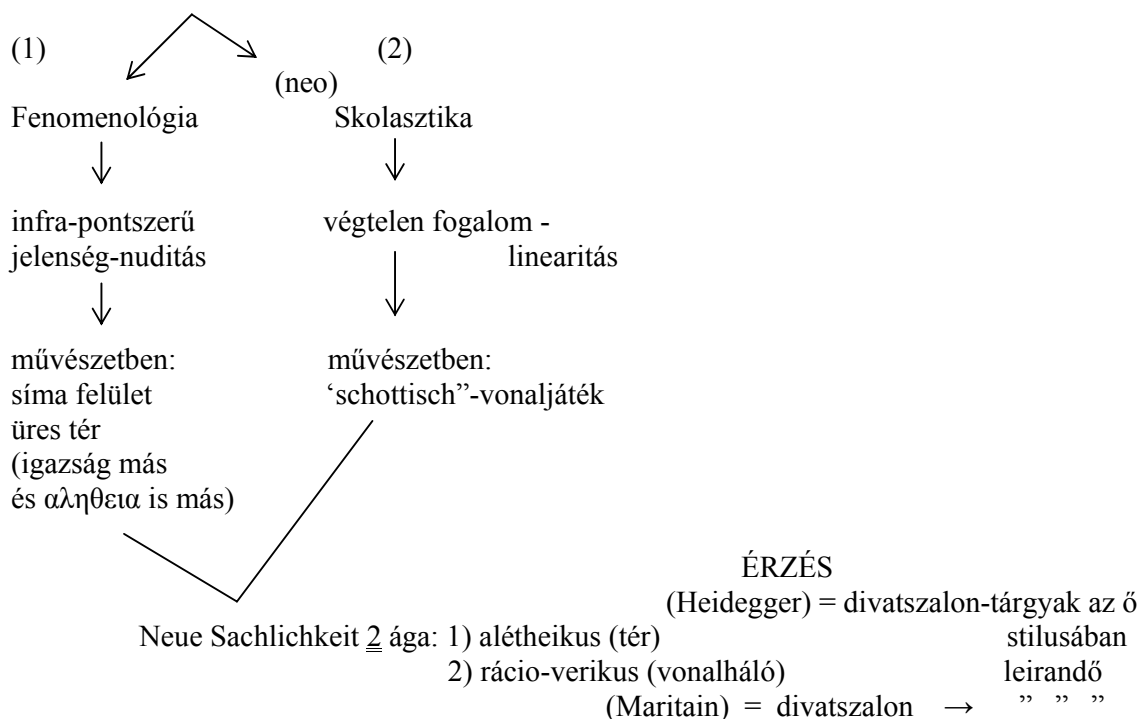
<sup>577</sup> “Nem mindennapi életünk szenvedéseiről, élményeiről szól.” *FH*, 360.

<sup>578</sup> *FH*, 316, 359, 450.

<sup>579</sup> “Heidegger körmönfont bölcsességeit.” *ÉF*, 27.

<sup>580</sup> Tompa, *Égő katedra*, 194

most distant nebulae are related,”<sup>581</sup> but whereas Paracelsus was looking for the common denominator of the stars, metals, herbs, and human bodies, the aim of *Prae* was to “incorporate the problems of modern philosophy and mathematics into modern fashion, love, and all aspects of life.”<sup>582</sup> In the PIM archives we can find a folio with a draft that was not used in *Prae* but which illustrates very well Szentkuthy’s quest for analogies. In draft 3, Szentkuthy sketches analogies between architectural forms, theology, and philosophy:

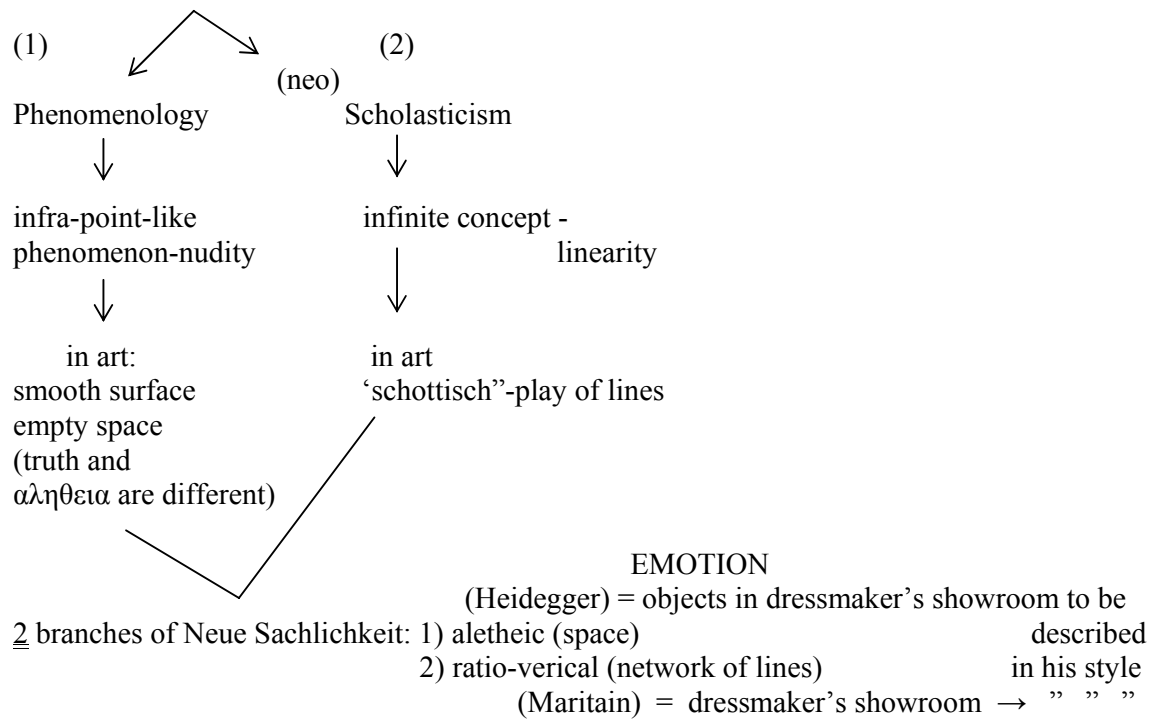


**Draft 3** Unused draft on relation of philosophy, theology and architecture (PIM V. 5498/23, fol. 3)<sup>583</sup>

<sup>581</sup> *FH*, 325. On Paracelsus, cf. the long passage in Szentkuthy, *Bianca Lanza di Casalanza*, 94–104.

<sup>582</sup> *ÉF*, 9.

<sup>583</sup> At this point it is perhaps worth noting that all transcriptions follow the drafts letter to letter even if the drafts include old spelling forms or mistakes. Thus, for instance, the correct form of the word *leirandó* (“to be described”) in draft 3 is *leirandó*. The word, at least nowadays, should be written with long *i*, but Szentkuthy often wrote the long vowel without the accent. As for the vowel *ő* instead of *ó* at the end, it is either Szentkuthy’s error, or a playful rhyme to *ő* (“he”) two lines earlier.



### Translation of draft 3

Draft 3 presents a table in which Szentkuthy attempts to discover analogies between philosophy and modern art. He associates Heidegger's phenomenology with qualities of smoothness and purity, while Jacques Maritain's theology brings to his mind grid patterns.

A similar quest for analogies can be found in the draft to *Interpolation*. Draft 4 presents a complex network of correspondences between literary, architectonical, philosophical, and theological concepts, which are connected by arrows and equal signs. Let us analyze the draft focusing on the elements that were used in *Interpolation*.

At the top of the page, Szentkuthy observes that what really interests him is "subjective event-life" (*szubjektív esemény-életem*), "dream-desires" (*álom-vágyaim*), and "dreams" (*álmain*), and that none of these things can be found in *Prae*. He then refers to them as *Non-Prae*. Next, he goes on to look for analogies to the pair *Prae* and *Non-Prae*. In the middle of the page, he writes "Phenomenologized Scholasticism" after which he adds in parentheses "Heidegger-Przywara S.J." Thus, the first word of the term "phenomenologized scholasticism" clearly refers to Heidegger. Below that, Szentkuthy refers to Heidegger's concept "Sich-vorweg-im-schon-sein-in." The term can be found in *Being and Time*, which Szentkuthy read in the summer of 1933 while working on additions to the first copybook. On page 195 (§41) of his copy of *Sein und Zeit*, he made a mark in the margin and underlined the words *Sich-vorweg-im-schon-sein-in...* (ahead-of-itself-in-already-being-in) (see 2.2.2 and Appendix 3, image 7). The term, as Richard Polt explains it, is Heidegger's concept of the



double structure of our existence as having a future (*Sich-vorweg* [ahead-of-itself]) and a past (*Schon-sein-in* [already-being-in]).<sup>584</sup> Following Heidegger, Szentkuthy also divides the term into two parts: a) “*Sich-vorweg*” and b) “*im-schon-sein-in*.” He notes the two concepts once again on the right side of the page, and then he connects them by arrows with the pair *Non-Prae* and *Prae*. Thus, after establishing the distinction between *Non-Prae* and *Prae*, Szentkuthy observes that their counterparts in Heideggerian philosophy are *Sich-vorweg* and *Schon-sein-in*, or, to use more common terms, future and past.

The second part of the concept of “Phenomenologized Scholasticism,” as Szentkuthy notes, refers to Erich Przywara, a German Jesuit theologian. One of Przywara’s main works was *Analogia Entis* (1932). The book can be found in Szentkuthy’s library (see 2.2.2). Throughout his book, Przywara uses the concept of *in-über* (“in-above”), which means that discovering God within us leads to cognition of the transcendent God above us.<sup>585</sup> The terms *in* and *über* also appear in Szentkuthy’s draft, and he puts these terms above the pair *Prae* and *Non-Prae*, which indicates that the distinction of *in-über* should be understood as parallel with that of *Prae* and *Non-Prae*.

Finally, Szentkuthy attempts to establish a correspondence between Heidegger’s and Przywara’s concepts and “*Neue Sachlichkeit* architectonic style” (*Neue Sachlichkeit* was for Szentkuthy a term synonymous with Bauhaus style). Thus, “*Sich-vorweg*” is connected with an equal sign with vertical clover made of empty spatial form, which in the final text will become the clover shaped window. As for “*Im-schon-sein-in*,” it is connected with an equal sign with the same clover horizontally made of black stone as a baptismal font, that is, the black marble baptistery.

Correspondences between literature, architecture, Heidegger’s *Being and Time* and Przywara’s *Analogia Entis* can be now presented in a synoptic table (see table 5). One can easily observe that there is a consistency to Szentkuthy’s system of analogies. The text of *Prae*, the black stone, the past and the God within us are terms that share qualities of definiteness and concreteness. Dreams, empty space, the future, and the transcendent God are all indefinite and insubstantial.

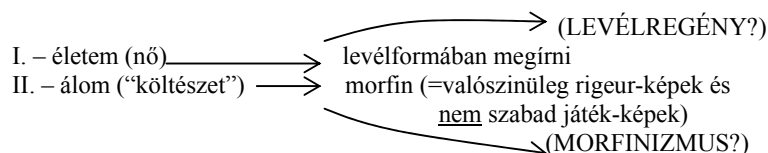
**Table 5** Analogies between literature, architecture, Heidegger’s *Being and Time* and Przywara’s *Analogia Entis* in the draft to *Interpolation*

Domain	Definite and concrete	Indefinite and insubstantial
Literature	<i>Prae</i> (text)	<i>Non-Prae</i> (life, dreams, desires)
Architecture	Clover shaped baptistry made of black stone	Clover made of empty space
Heidegger’s <i>Being and Time</i>	<i>Im-schon-sein-in</i> (past)	<i>Sich-vorweg</i> (future)
Przywara’s <i>Analogia Entis</i>	In (God within us)	Über (God above us)

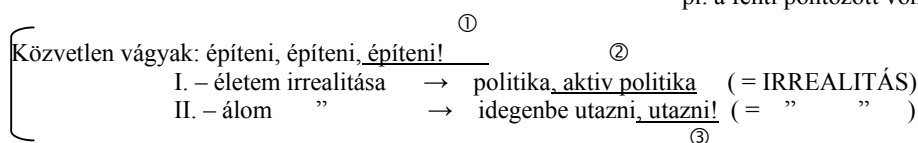
<sup>584</sup> Richard Polt, *Heidegger: An Introduction* (London: UCL Press, 1999), 79.

<sup>585</sup> I found this explanation in Philibert Secrétan, “L’analogie selon Gustav Siewerth et Erich Przywara: Essai d’étude comparative,” *Revue Philosophique de Louvain* 95, no. 2 (1997): 310.

álom-vágyaim és álmaim (= ismeretlen tájak – II. (nő)  
 egyikről sincs szó a "Prae"-ben      életem ————— } azonos alaktan  
 "Prae"]  
 mi az élet esemény legautonómabb jellemzője?      ↓  
 mi a "költő" dolog      " " " "      álmom ————— }  
 azonosak, az tény.      (glossy incredulity of roses)  
 esemény sohasem "létezik": nyitott, határtalan, anyagtalan.

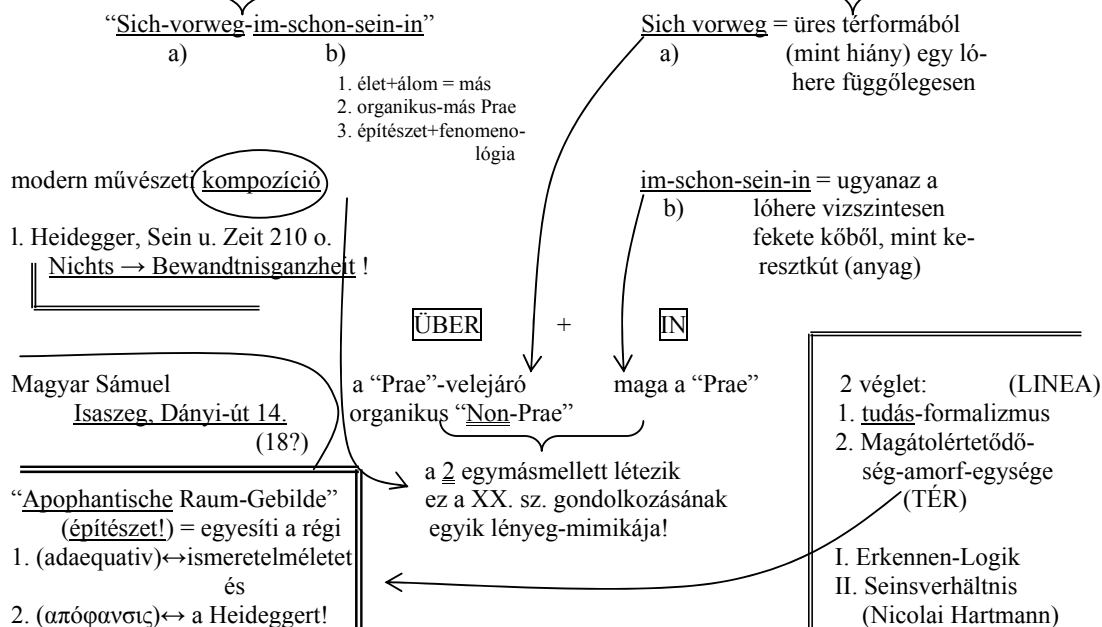


élet = mozgás; a) barokk rossz mozgás-értelmezése: – “mozgás = erő” –  
b) ma jó ” ” : – “mozgás = irrealitás precíziója”  
pl. a fenti pontozott vonalak)



minden műnek megvan a maga saját, szerves más-alakja, ellen-alakja, "nem-ő"-je, a credo organikus 'ambigu'-rétege (= l. Heidegger "Angst"-elemzését stb.) A.)  
a mesterséges oszcillátorok, identitás-szaggatók és "szubstancia-alienációk mellett B.)  
2-féle másság-fejlesztés. (Mi a 'Prae' organikus 'Nem-Prae'-je?)

Fenomenologizált Skolasztika (Heidegger-Przywara S.J.) = Neue Sachlichkeit építészeti stílusa



**Draft 4.** Draft to *Interpolation* (PIM V. 5498/23, fol. 6). See Appendix 3, image 5.<sup>586</sup>

<sup>586</sup> The words “építeni” (“to build”), “aktiv politika” (“active politics”), and “utazni” (“to travel”) are underlined with red crayon. Three numbers referring to them are also in red. “Kompozíció” (“composition”) is circled with

We can see from table 5 that Szentkuthy's system of analogies consists of four elements. In the final text of *Interpolation*, two elements (the opposition of *Prae* and *Non-Prae* and its architectural counterpart) are written out and expanded. What happens to the other two elements? As for the opposition of *in-über*, the relation of analogy to *Prae* and *Non-Prae* is retained, but Przywara's name is suppressed.<sup>587</sup> This might be considered a case of obscuring suppression yet a less significant one as only the source (hypotext) of the terms is suppressed while the relation of the terms *in-über* to *Prae* and *Non-Prae* is retained. However, the situation is different with the Heideggerean term used in the title of the reference book. Here is the crucial point of the present analysis: in *Prae* the concept of *Sich-vorweg-im-schon-sein-in* lacks division into two subconcepts. Hence, there is no indication whatsoever concerning how the concept is related to the previous series of analogies. In consequence, the reader may easily suppose that the final reference is "bluff," as Rugási would put it.<sup>588</sup> Only after studying the draft can we see how *Sich-vorweg-im-schon-sein-in* relates to the argumentation presented in *Interpolation*, and only in the draft did Szentkuthy divide Heidegger's concept into two terms and mark the analogical relation of the terms to other dualities (*in* and *über*, *Prae* and *Non-Prae*, baptistry and window). As an epilogue to this discussion, it is worth noting that, interestingly, in the third, posthumous edition of *Prae* (2003), the hyphen between *Sich-vorweg* and *im-schon-sein-in* is missing, as if the editor wanted to indicate the connection of the terms with the preceding series of analogies.<sup>589</sup> However, in the first (1934) and the second edition (1980) the term remains undivided.

Why did Szentkuthy suppress the information that is necessary to understand his ideas? Let us reread the phrase: "*If we want to put this well in quick relation with modern phenomenological theology.*" The attribute "quick" might suggest that Szentkuthy was in a hurry and did not have time to expand the analogy. But whatever the cause of suppression may be, arrows in the draft to *Interpolation* indicate that the Heideggerean term had a precise place in Szentkuthy's series of analogies. Rugási is clearly mistaken when he argues that all of the German terms in *Prae* are a meaningless bluff. The German terms in the final paragraph of *Interpolation* might look like a bluff or stylistic embellishment, but the *avant-texte* clearly shows that they are remnants of a system that Szentkuthy had in mind, sketched, but did not elaborate with the same thoroughness in *Prae*.

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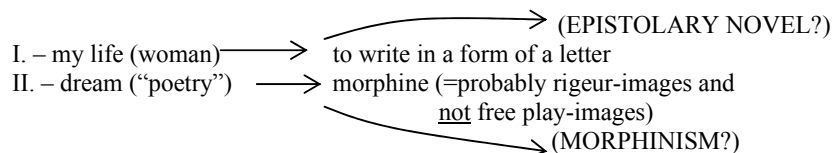
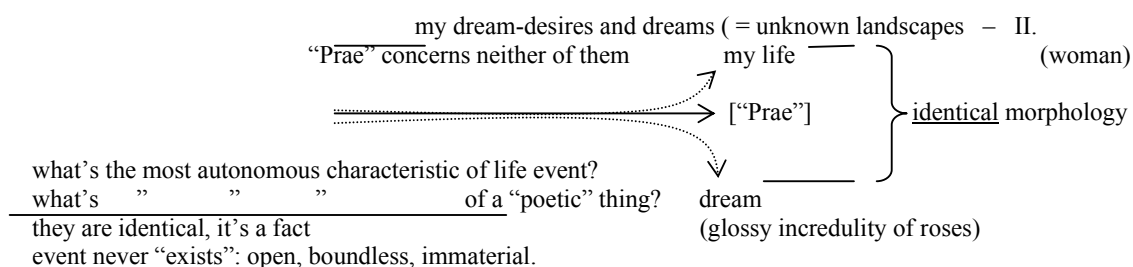
green crayon. Also the double bent line under "Nichts → Bewandtnisganzheit" and the exclamation mark after it are in green. The note on Sámuel Magyar, and the three points in the middle of the page starting with "1. élet+álmom = más" ("1. life+dream = other"), are written in pencil. The arrow between "TER" ("SPACE") in the lower right corner and "Apophantische Raum-Gebilde," the line delineating the note in the lower left corner, and the underlining of "építészet" ("architecture") (also lower left corner) are in blue crayon. "Glossy incredulity of roses" is in English in the original.

<sup>587</sup> It should be mentioned that Przywara's name does appear in *Prae*, though in another context: *P II*, 235.

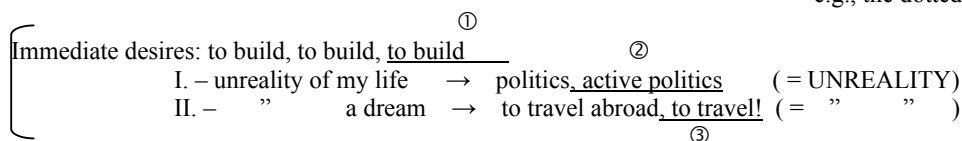
<sup>588</sup> Rugási, "Leatrice görög arca," 312.

<sup>589</sup> Miklós Szentkuthy, *Prae*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Budapest: Magvető, 2004), 1:91.

I've been really interested in 2 things: my subjective event-life – I.

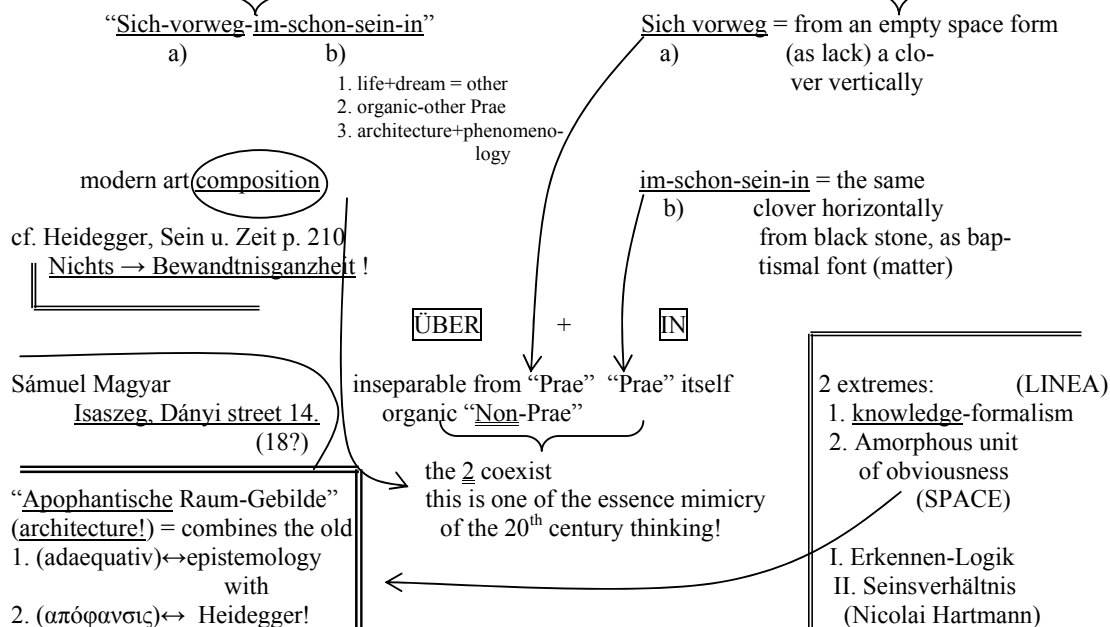


life = movement; a) Baroque's bad interpretation of movement: – “movement = force” –  
 b) today's good ” ” : – “movement = precision of irreality”  
 e.g., the dotted lines above)



every work has its own, organic other-form, anti-form, its “not-it”,  
 the ‘ambigu’-layer of credo (= cf. Heidegger's “Angst” analysis etc.) A.)  
 beside the artificial oscillators, identity-jaggers and “substance alienations” B.)  
 2 kinds of alterity development. (What is the organic ‘Non-Prae’ of ‘Prae’?)

Phenomenologized Scholasticism (Heidegger-Przywara S.J.) = Neue Sachlichkeit architectural style



Translation of draft 4

## 5.4 Note on Flaubert

This section discusses the procedure of obscuring suppression in Flaubert's writing practice. Although comparing Szentkuthy with other writers is not the goal of this thesis, Flaubert's method of writing bears so many similarities to Szentkuthy's obscuring suppression that I decided to include here a (very selective) résumé of the previous genetic research on the French writer. The section has the character of an extended footnote. It notes similarities between Szentkuthy's and Flaubert's writing techniques, it shows possibilities for future research, but as such the section is of less significance to the whole thesis.

The genetic studies of Flaubert's manuscripts have shown that one of the particularities of his technique was to reduce the avant-textual material to the extent that the final text became elliptic and lacunar. One of the best expositions of Flaubert's technique can be found in de Biasi's article, "Flaubert et la poétique du non-finito."<sup>590</sup> In his article, de Biasi shows that Flaubert's work proceeded in two main phases. In the first phase, after making general plans, the author writes them out by gradually amplifying the textual material. In the second phase, when the amplification has reached the saturation point, he condenses the text by reducing the accumulated material; he discards words, phrases, sometimes whole blocks of text. In effect, the final text appears to be incomplete, *non-finito*, as de Biasi calls the procedure.

It is worth noting that the extensive reduction of the material often produces enigmas and lacunae in the final text. The question is why Flaubert would do so. Did he deliberately make his texts obscure, or is the Flaubertian *non-finito* effect one of accidental omissions? The geneticists are not unanimous. Let us see two studies of *Sentimental Education* that interpret Flaubert's deletions in two different ways. The first study, written by Peter Michael Wetherill, concerns the final episode of the novel.<sup>591</sup> At the end of *Sentimental Education*, Frederick and Deslauriers recall their visit to a brothel in the summer of 1837 in Nogent. The visit came to nothing: Frederick got scared and escaped, while Deslauriers, who did not have his own money, had to follow him. They tried to keep their visit a secret but they were noticed on their way out.<sup>592</sup> At the beginning of the novel, in chapter 2, Frederick and Deslauriers walk along the same house and make a vague allusion to this episode but the allusion is not comprehensible to the reader.<sup>593</sup> Wetherill's study shows that, in the *avant-texte*, Flaubert notes that the final scene should make a reference to the allusion from the beginning. In this way, the reader who arrives at the end of the book would be able to recall and understand the initial allusion. However, in the final text, Flaubert eliminated this reference. In effect, when reading the final episode, after several hundred pages, it is almost impossible to remember the vague and brief remark from the beginning of the novel. Wetherill claims that, by eliminating cross-references, Flaubert distances himself from Balzac (whose narrator always provides his readers with guidelines) and comes closer to modernist writers (Joyce, Woolf, and Kafka) in

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<sup>590</sup> Pierre-Marc de Biasi, "Flaubert et la poétique du non-finito," in *Le manuscrit inachevé: Écriture, création, communication*, ed. Louis Hay (Paris: CNRS, 1986), 45–73.

<sup>591</sup> Peter Michael Wetherill, "«C'est là ce que nous avons eu de meilleur»," in *Flaubert à l'oeuvre*, ed. Louis Hay (Paris: Flammarion, 1980), 35–68.

<sup>592</sup> Gustave Flaubert, *L'éducation sentimentale* (Paris: Librairie Générale Française, 1973), 385–86.

<sup>593</sup> Flaubert, *L'éducation sentimentale*, 24.

whose prose the reader must himself actively look for the clues and explore the riddles of the text. Also, Graham Falconer, in his study of the *Madame Bovary* manuscripts, shows that by deleting certain passages (narratorial comments and explications, elements of descriptions, such as similes) Flaubert breaks with the Balzacian paradigm of the novel, and presages the modernist novel. Falconer calls this writing technique “debalzacianization.”<sup>594</sup> Flaubert’s operation of deleting the cross-references is thus interpreted as a technique that makes him a forerunner of modernism.

In her genetic analysis of *Sentimental Education*, Marion Schmid offers a different view.<sup>595</sup> In one of her analyses, Schmid investigates the genesis of a fragment from chapter 5 of part 1 of the novel. When Frederick goes to the Arnoux’s country-house at Saint-Cloud, he takes with him a letter that Mademoiselle Vatnaz has written to Arnoux. After reading the letter, Arnoux puts it in his pocket and announces that he wants to return to Paris the same day. Madame Arnoux decides to go with him. Before their departure, Arnoux gives his wife flowers wrapped in a piece of paper taken from his pocket. He fixes the paper with a pin. Madame Arnoux cuts herself with the pin and goes up to her room. She comes back after a quarter of an hour without the bouquet. Frederick fetches the flowers, but Madame Arnoux says she does not want them. In the carriage she is very irritated and finally tosses the bouquet out of the carriage-door. Frederick notices she is crying but does not know the reason for Madame Arnoux’s sadness.<sup>596</sup> Now, what Schmid shows is that, in the *avant-texte*, the events are much more explicit; more precisely, there are three things that the published text does not tell us that the *avant-texte* does. Firstly, in her letter, Mademoiselle Vatnaz declares that she will remain Arnoux’s lover. Secondly, it is precisely in this letter that Arnoux, by accident, wraps the roses for his wife. Thirdly, when Madame Arnoux cuts herself, she goes to her room and reads the letter, which explains her behaviour in the carriage. Schmid admits that, in theory, it is possible to guess what happened: Frederick has seen Arnoux with Mademoiselle Vatnaz together in Alhambra and he has suspected that they might have a relationship. However, since it is very difficult to notice all of the clues, Schmid concludes that the suppression of the important information from the *avant-texte* produces opacity in the published text. It is only when we read the *avant-texte* that we can fully understand the events in Saint-Cloud. Pointing out that Flaubert did worry about the readability of his texts, Schmid seems to suggest that some of the opacities might be unintended omissions.<sup>597</sup> It should be noted that Schmid never uses the term “omission” or “error.” Instead, she speaks of “the internal logic and rationale of text” which is responsible for the obscurity of the final text.<sup>598</sup> But it seems to me that “the internal logic of text” is nothing more than a euphemism for the writer’s work, unless we assume that in some miraculous way the text is able to write itself without human agency. We can thus conclude that Schmid interprets obscurization as a result

<sup>594</sup> Graham Falconer, “Le travail de «débalzacianisation» dans la rédaction de *Madame Bovary*,” *La revue des lettres modernes*, no. 865–872 (1988): 123–156.

<sup>595</sup> Marion Schmid, *Processes of Literary Creation: Flaubert and Proust* (Oxford: European Humanities Research Centre, 1998), 103–4.

<sup>596</sup> Flaubert, *L’éducation sentimentale*, 80–84.

<sup>597</sup> Schmid, *Processes of Literary Creation*, 113–14.

<sup>598</sup> Schmid, *Processes of Literary Creation*, 115.

of authorial oversight, or an unintended omission. Similarly, many of the discrepancies in *Prae* may also be authorial oversights or unintended omissions.

In light of the aforementioned genetic studies on Flaubert, the present thesis could be continued in several directions. For instance, bearing in mind Wetherill's and Schmid's analyses, it would be worth examining whether Szentkuthy obscured his text intentionally or only accidentally. Section 5.4 showed that, in the final text of *Prae*, the relation of the term *Sich-vorweg-im-schon-sein-in* to the series of analogies is lost. Did Szentkuthy deliberately create this riddle, inspired perhaps by Joyce's *Ulysses*, or *Work in Progress*, as *Finnegans Wake* was called at that time? Or was the obscurity simply due to oversight? Perhaps more can be said on the subject when Szentkuthy's diary is made available to researchers. The future research could also involve a comparative examination of Manninen's, Flaubert's, and Szentkuthy's writing techniques. Until now, genetic criticism has focused mainly on Joyce and the French classics. It would be interesting to study writing practices from a comparative perspective in order to reveal individual differences as well as similarities that go beyond the national divisions.

## 5.5 Conclusions

In the present chapter I have analyzed two cases of the act that I name obscuring suppression. In the analysis of the fragment that I name *Development of pain*, I have shown that the *avant-texte* contains three similes that were suppressed from the final text. In effect, while the scene that in the drafts is almost cinematic, in the final text appears much less vivid. The second example is slightly different. In the analysis of the draft to *Interpolation*, I have shown that the Heideggerian term *Sich-vorweg-im-schon-sein-in* had a precise place in a system of analogies that Szentkuthy sketched but, in the final text, the relation of the term to the rest of the argumentation is lost.

The analyzed *avant-textes* provide material that is richer than the final text. Naturally, for purely text-oriented approaches, this discovery will not have much significance since studying the poetics of *Prae* does not necessarily demand knowledge of *avant-textes*. However, the drafts will be useful material for all approaches that involve studying the ideas that the writer wanted to explore in *Prae*. Consider the vision described in the drafts to *Development of pain*. Unlike the text of *Prae*, the drafts give a precise record of how Szentkuthy envisaged the slowly developing pain. The *avant-texte* shows that he associated the developing emotion with a visual, almost cinematic scene. This information might be useful for instance for thematic criticism, an approach that is interested in investigating the writer's imagination. As for Heidegger's term, the analysis presented here will be of great interest to researchers who study Szentkuthy as a thinker, and more precisely for all those who are interested in the role of Heidegger's philosophy in Szentkuthy's intellectual development. It is in open question how much of *Being and Time* Szentkuthy understood, but the draft to *Interpolation* clearly shows that Heidegger's philosophy meant more to him than just stylistic inventiveness. When Szentkuthy's diary and other uncatalogued material from PIM will be opened to researchers,

it might reveal new material useful for studying Szentkuthy's ideas. Time will show how many more drafts of *Prae* might be found. Hopefully, if new drafts are discovered, we will acquire greater insight into Szentkuthy's imagination and his ideas, and by this we will be able to better understand *Prae*.



## 6 Immediate Absorption

### 6.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the writing operation that I name “immediate absorption.” The principle of this operation is spontaneous and immediate incorporation of readerly and personal experiences into the text when it is underway. In other words, Szentkuthy had a habit of putting his current experiences into whatever text he was simultaneously working on. Knowledge of this technique gives us new perspectives for the intertextual examination of *Prae*. Comparison of parts of *Prae* (provided they can be dated) to Szentkuthy’s experiences from the same time may reveal sources which otherwise would remain unidentified and which can be helpful in understanding *Prae*.

Documentary material allows us to analyze the four following cases of immediate absorption: in the summer of 1932, Szentkuthy read works by Bergson, after which he used Bergsonian motifs in the *Antipsyché Idylls*, an addition which he was writing at that time (6.2); in the summer of 1933, Szentkuthy read books on physics that influenced both the themes and vocabulary of the additions and corrections to the first copybook, which he edited at that time (6.3); also in the summer of 1933, he read the works of Heidegger and Husserl, which inspired him to use German philosophical terms in the additions and corrections to the first copybook (6.4); in autumn of 1933, after returning from Switzerland, Szentkuthy transferred memories of the alpine landscapes into his additions to the Exeter parson’s diary, which he was revising at that time (6.5). Section 6.6 draws conclusions for future research.

Before the analysis, let us first deal with some terminological questions. In her book *Métamorphoses du récit*, Raymonde Debray Genette divided the writing process into exogenesis (gathering the sources), and endogenesis (working on the text).<sup>599</sup> Later, de Biasi improved upon this distinction by proposing a tripartite division into documentation, structuration, and textualization. While exogenesis equals documentation, endogenesis is subdivided into structuration, that is planning, and textualization, that is, execution of the plan. Every writer employs these three operations; what makes the writing methods different is the character of their mutual relations. In Szentkuthy’s case, documentation is immediately followed by textualization. Drawing upon de Biasi’s terms, we could then call the analyzed operation *chronological proximity of documentation and textualization*. However, since this term is long and clumsy, I prefer the term *immediate absorption*.

We should also differentiate between planned and processual immediate absorption. My hypothesis is that Szentkuthy included the new sources in *Prae* spontaneously, that is, without planning. We could then contrast Szentkuthy’s method to that of Flaubert. Flaubert usually completed documentation before beginning to write, but sometimes continued documentation during writing and also incorporated his sources immediately. But even in such cases incorporation was planned. To give a brief example, Flaubert began to sketch *Sentimental Education* in 1862; he began to write it in 1864. In March of 1868, he began to work on

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<sup>599</sup> Debray Genette, *Métamorphoses du récit*, 23–31.

chapter 1 of the third part. The chapter includes an episode when in June of 1848, Frederick goes with Rosanette to Fontainebleau. Shortly before writing this episode, in late July and early August, Flaubert himself twice visited Fontainebleau to study its topography. The notes from his visit can be found in *Carnet 12*. In late August, in a letter to his niece Caroline, he informs her that he is writing the Fontainebleau episode.<sup>600</sup> He thus textualized the notes shortly after his return to his home in Croisset; nevertheless, the whole procedure was planned. As for Szentkuthy, the PIM archives do not include documents that would imply that the operation was planned. In consequence, incorporating newly discovered themes into the text was most likely a spontaneous decision, triggered by Szentkuthy's readings or life experiences.

## 6.2 Bergson

The purpose of this section is to show that, in the summer of 1932, after reading four books by Henri Bergson, Szentkuthy included his reflections on Bergsonian themes in the *Antipsyché Idylls*, an addition to *Prae* that he was writing at that time. Bergson's influence on *Prae* has been previously noted, but scholars' hypotheses have not been supported by empirical evidence.<sup>601</sup> The following examination specifies that it is in the *Antipsyché Idylls* that we are most likely to find Bergsonian influences.

Szentkuthy most probably bought Bergson's works during his sojourn to France in March and April of 1932, on the way back from London to Budapest.<sup>602</sup> All four books are extant in Szentkuthy's library. The writer's notes indicate that he read them in the summer of 1932, from the end of May until the first days of July (see 2.2.1). *Les deux sources de la morale et de la religion* is dated "end of May–2 June," *Essai sur les données immédiates de la conscience* – "25–26 June," *Matière et mémoire* – "25–29 June," and *L'évolution créatrice* – "1–5 July." Cross-references in the margins indicate that Szentkuthy must have reread some of the books. For instance, although Szentkuthy dates *Données* after *Deux sources*, in the margin of *Deux sources* there are references to *Données*, which would imply that, while reading *Données*, he must have been simultaneously rereading *Deux sources*. Let us conclude then that, although we cannot be sure about exactly when Szentkuthy read and reread each of the books, we can generally say that he read Bergson's works within the span of late May to early July 1932. In all four books we find reading traces. Numerous notes, marks in the margins, and underlined passages all indicate that Szentkuthy diligently studied Bergson's philosophy.

<sup>600</sup> Pierre-Marc de Biasi, ed., *Carnets de travail*, by Gustave Flaubert (Paris: Balland, 1988), 312–13, 403–4.

<sup>601</sup> Hanák, "Praefilozófia," 21, 22; Rugási, "Kant és az egér," 75–76; Fekete, "Prae," 96, 103. Nagy, *Az elérhetetlen szöveg*, 67, 86.

<sup>602</sup> One of the books bought by Szentkuthy, *Les deux sources de la morale et de la religion*, first appeared in 1932. In March and April of 1932, he spent three weeks in France; it seems quite probable that during his sojourn to France he bought *Deux sources*, as well as the other books. According to Szentkuthy, he bought these books after reading about them in Mihály Babits's essay on Bergson, which appeared in the journal *Nyugat* in 1910. *ÉF*, 31.

Simultaneously with reading Bergson, in the early summer of 1932, Szentkuthy was working on the *Antipsyché Idylls*. The addition was written on separate small pieces of paper and was attached to the end of *Touqué's monologue*. The general idea of the *Antipsyché Idylls* was sketched at the beginning of June of that year.<sup>603</sup> The first half of the addition was sketched between the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> of June. The writing process must have begun sometime in July.

Although the first part of the *Antipsyché Idylls* is not explicitly about Bergson's philosophy, we can find in it numerous passages that seem to be inspired by Bergson's books. All references to Bergson are implicit, save for one that was added one year later when Szentkuthy was correcting the manuscript. Let us now see what these references are.

One of Bergson's principal theses is that there is a difference between abstract time, which is measured by a clock, and time that is experienced subjectively, which Bergson calls duration. A similar idea is mooted twice in the *Antipsyché Idylls*: firstly, in a short passage where Szentkuthy argues that it is impossible to measure time with a calendar because time is connected to individuals who have different inner rhythms;<sup>604</sup> and secondly, he juxtaposes "inhuman time," which is common to all people, with time as individuals experience it ("chronoid sphere").<sup>605</sup> One year later, in 1933, Szentkuthy completed the latter reference with a short comment (marginal addition) in which he compares a man immersed in his individual time to a monk from a "Bergsonian order"<sup>606</sup> and by this confirms our hypothesis about Bergson's influence.

Another principal concept of Bergson's is that of *élan vital*, a creative force situated at the core of life. When speaking of our inner life, Szentkuthy uses many terms that seem to reverberate with Bergson's concept: "life force,"<sup>607</sup> "magnetic center of life,"<sup>608</sup> "magnetic force" of the "biological center."<sup>609</sup>

Also, many of the motifs from *Matter and Memory* have been incorporated into the *Antipsyché Idylls*. For instance, Bergson's book often juxtaposes present and past; similar dualist juxtapositions can be found in *Prae*.<sup>610</sup> We can also find the famous image of an inversed cone with which Bergson illustrates the relation between memory and perception. Szentkuthy uses this image twice by comparing pain to a tornado in a shape of an inversed cone.<sup>611</sup> What *Matter and Memory* also concerns is the nature of images in our memory, which are different from the images we perceive. Similar reflections can be detected at the end of the first half of the *Antipsyché Idylls*, where after dealing with the question of pain, Szentkuthy analyzes the nature of the image of a woman that remains in our memory after the woman has left us.<sup>612</sup>

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<sup>603</sup> *FTJ*, 103.

<sup>604</sup> *PI*, 195.

<sup>605</sup> "Embertelen idő," "kronoid szféra." *PI*, 198.

<sup>606</sup> "Bergson-rendű." *PI*, 199; PIM V. 5498/22/I/1, fol. 159r.

<sup>607</sup> "Életerő." *PI*, 195.

<sup>608</sup> "Az élet magnetikus központja" *PI*, 200.

<sup>609</sup> "A biológiai középpont," "magnetikus ereje." *PI*, 194.

<sup>610</sup> *PI*, 190–91.

<sup>611</sup> *PI*, 190, 193.

<sup>612</sup> *PI*, 210–17.

As for *Time and Free Will* (*Essai sur les données immédiates de la conscience*), one of the themes of this early book is that it is impossible to fully express our inner life with language. The same idea appears in the passage that describes a man whose lover shot herself in a hotel room. In his analysis, Szentkuthy repeats Bergson's thesis: the man's experience of suffering cannot be expressed by language and thus, it cannot be shared with other people.<sup>613</sup>

To conclude, in June of 1932, Szentkuthy read Bergson's works and sketched material for the *Antipsyché Idylls*. Shortly thereafter, in July, he wrote out the material and incorporated Bergsonian motifs into the text of the addition. There is no evidence that he had been planning to include Bergsonian themes in *Prae*. Most probably, they emerged as a spontaneous reaction to the books Szentkuthy was reading.

### 6.3 Modern Physics

The following analysis shows that, in the summer of 1933, when Szentkuthy was correcting *Touqué's monologue*, he completed the text with scientific terms culled from the physics books that he was reading simultaneously. It has been previously observed that *Prae* contains numerous references to physics.<sup>614</sup> What the present analysis specifies is that the influence of physics is limited to the parts written in the first period of stage 5, that is, June–August 1933.

Szentkuthy's interest in physics might have already arisen in the years 1931–32, which he spent in London. In the 1930s in England, developments of modern physics were reviewed in the literary periodicals that Szentkuthy might have read.<sup>615</sup> Nevertheless, it is only in 1933 that he actually bought physics books and began to incorporate scientific terms into the text of *Prae*. While the first copybook—which Szentkuthy edited in the summer 1933—abounds in scientific terms, other parts of *Prae* hardly contain any references to physics. There are some exceptions, such as “quantum of desire” (in Touqué's monologue, written at stage 3) and “Planck's constant” (in the Exeter parson's monologue, written at stage 4), but they are rare.<sup>616</sup>

Seven of the physics books that Szentkuthy read are extant in his library (see 2.2.3). Two of them, A.S. Eddington's *The Nature of the Physical World* and James Jeans's *The Mysterious Universe*, were at the time very popular works with a readership beyond science circles.<sup>617</sup> The five other books include: Arthur Eddington's *The Expanding Universe*, Albert Einstein's *On the Method of Theoretical Physics*, James Jeans's *The New Background of Science*, John Macmurray's *Interpreting the Universe*, and Arthur March's *Moderne*

<sup>613</sup> *P I*, 196–99.

<sup>614</sup> Rugási, “Kant és az Egér,” 68, 78–83; Fekete, “Prae,” 93, 97; Nagy, *Az elérhetetlen szöveg*, 102; László Jéki, “Szentkuthy Miklós,” KFKI híradó, no. 6–7 (1983): 34–35.

<sup>615</sup> Michael H. Whitworth, “Science in the Age of Modernism,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Modernisms*, ed. Peter Brooker et al. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 451.

<sup>616</sup> “Vágy-kvantum,” *P I*, 89; “Planck-féle állandó,” *P II*, 315.

<sup>617</sup> For instance, we know that E.M. Forster read Eddington's book, while Virginia Woolf read Jeans's *Mysterious Universe*. Whitworth, “Science in the Age of Modernism,” 451, 453.

*Atomphysik: Eine allgemein verständliche Einführung*. All seven books show numerous reading traces including underlined passages and markings in the margins.

All of the books mentioned here were published in 1933 (although Eddington's *The Nature of the Physical World* and Jeans's *The Mysterious Universe* were first published respectively in 1928 and 1930). This means that Szentkuthy must have ordered the books in the first half of 1933. In *Frivolities and Confessions*, he recalls that the books on physics made a great impact on him.<sup>618</sup> His fascination with the new topic is also visible in his letters to Mária Hercz, where he speaks of his emotions in scientific terms,<sup>619</sup> and declares that his present "lovers" are Dirac, Schrödinger, Born, and Jordan (these names can be found, underlined by Szentkuthy, on page 207 of Eddington's *The Nature of the Physical World*).<sup>620</sup> The documentary evidence shows that Szentkuthy read the physics books in the second half of July and in August of 1933. In a letter to Hercz, dated 18 July 1933, he reports on reading works by Jeans, Eddington, and Einstein. He is happy to discover in their books analyses that he had already done in *Prae*.<sup>621</sup> In a letter from the 20<sup>th</sup> of July, he says he is currently reading Eddington's *The Nature of the Physical World*.<sup>622</sup> Some of the books have reading dates that corroborate the testimony of the letters. *Interpreting the Universe* is dated 10–11 July 1933. At the end of Jeans's *The Mysterious Universe*, Szentkuthy noted the date 14–15 July 1933. *The Nature of the Physical World* is dated 16–22 July. Einstein's book is dated 18 July 1933, both at the beginning and at the end; March's book is dated 1 August 1933; *The Expanding Universe* is dated 12 August 1933. In the PIM archives, there is also a draft where the names of Jeans and Eddington appear (see draft 5). The note above the draft is dated 14 July, while a draft below is dated 27 July. This suggests that the draft with Jeans and Eddington was written between these days, that is, in the second half of July. The draft was not incorporated into *Prae* (although the novel once mentions the name of De Sitter),<sup>623</sup> but it shows that, at that time, Szentkuthy was reflecting on the physical terms of which he read in the works of Jeans and Eddington.

<u>szerkezet</u> –	<Jeans> .... force →	courbature de l'espace	} a "szenzibilitás materializmusa" <u>ellen</u>
	<Eddington> ... substantiality →	emptiness	
Touqué: Aktív Newton –	koitalizmustól →	EROS	
passzív De Sitter	"virgincestusig"	útja	
(tér)			

**Draft 5** Draft on Jeans and Eddington (PIM V. 5498/23, fol. 7)

<sup>618</sup> *FH*, 320, 361.

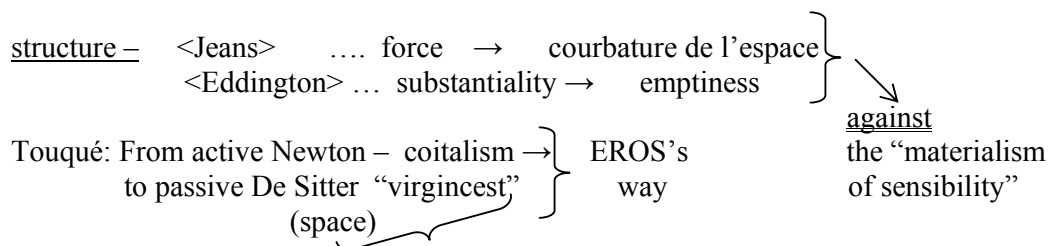
<sup>619</sup> Szentkuthy to Mária Hercz, 18 July 1933; Szentkuthy to Mária Hercz, 19 July 1933.

<sup>620</sup> Szentkuthy to Mária Hercz, 20 July 1933.

<sup>621</sup> Szentkuthy to Mária Hercz, 18 July 1933.

<sup>622</sup> Szentkuthy to Mária Hercz, 20 July 1933.

<sup>623</sup> *PI*, 181.



## Translation of draft 5

Analysis of the manuscript of *Prae* clearly shows that most of the references to science can be found in the first copybook, which was completed and corrected in the summer of 1933 (see 2.3.1.3 and 3.7). Physical motifs can be found for instance in the additions to the rectos of the copybook (written probably in May–June 1933). In addition 21 to chapter 5, we can find brief references to quantum theory; addition 22 mentions the name Rutherford; the theme of addition 31 is an analogy between reactive current, the sea, and women’s fashion.<sup>624</sup> In chapter 1, there are numerous references to electricity: oscillator, Kelvin’s two-coil galvanometer, shunt, “electric standing waves.”<sup>625</sup> Also, the name de Broglie is mentioned.<sup>626</sup> In chapter 1, we also find references to Touqué reading a “new physics book,”<sup>627</sup> which certainly is a remark of autobiographical origin.

However, it is *Touqué’s monologue* (corrected in July 1933), and especially its final part, the *Antipsyché Idylls* (corrected in late July), where we encounter the greatest abundance of physics terms. In the additions to the monologue, attached during its correction, there are references to an oscillator (addition 5),<sup>628</sup> Heisenberg (addition 7),<sup>629</sup> interferences of waves (addition 9),<sup>630</sup> quantum theory (addition 16),<sup>631</sup> and Einstein (addition 19).<sup>632</sup>

Besides expanding the text with additions, Szentkuthy spiced up the monologue with scientific terms and the names of famous physicists, adding them on margins or between lines. Let us see some examples of this procedure. At the beginning of chapter 4 (*Antipsyché Idylls*), Szentkuthy describes music as a force that disrupts the harmony of our mind and produces chaos in our thoughts. In 1932, he used a biological metaphor to describe the influence of music on the mind: music pushes the soul into “multiplication by division.” In 1933, Szentkuthy added to this passage “or into Rutherford-liturgies,” by which he referred to Ernest Rutherford’s discovery of the nuclear structure of the atom.<sup>633</sup> Thus, in 1932, the

<sup>624</sup> *P I*, 267; *P I*, 277; *P I*, 348–50.

<sup>625</sup> “Oscillátor” *P I*, 23; “Kelvin-féle kéttelkereszes galvanométer” *P I*, 36; “shunt” *P I*, 37; “elektromos állóhullámok” *P I*, 41.

<sup>626</sup> *P I*, 39.

<sup>627</sup> “Új fizikakönyvek.” *P I*, 39.

<sup>628</sup> *P I*, 86.

<sup>629</sup> *P I*, 97.

<sup>630</sup> *P I*, 118–19.

<sup>631</sup> *P I*, 217.

<sup>632</sup> *P I*, 244.

<sup>633</sup> “Rutherford-liturgiákba.” *P I*, 184; PIM V. 5498/22/I/1, fol. 144r.

chaotic mind is compared to a multiplying cell, while in 1933, it is compared to an atom. In a later part of the *Antipsyché Idylls*, Szentkuthy describes a silent nocturnal landscape, which is brought to Touqué's mind by a girl whom he sees in a concert hall cloakroom. After describing the lake, the bushes, and the trees, Szentkuthy goes on to depict the silence. In the 1932 version, it seems "as if (...) little arrows of silence were humming in the place of sleeping lizards." In 1933, the same sentence became enhanced with attributes related to electricity: Ampère and short-circuit. In the final text it seems "as if (...) little Ampère-arrows of silence were humming in the short-circuit ways of sleeping lizards."<sup>634</sup>

Sometimes the physical terms are used to replace old expressions. Often the deleted expression is readable. In effect, we can clearly see how Szentkuthy wanted to improve his text by replacing ordinary expressions with physics terms. For instance, when Touqué carries a coat to his mother's workshop, he opens the box and marvels, "Minkowski forms" at the coat, but before they were simply "geometrical forms."<sup>635</sup> Or, after spending a night with Jacqueline, in the morning, Touqué goes to the bathroom and sees the sun shining on the "Schrödinger  $\Psi$ -accessoire" of the sea gulf, which before was simply "fine arc" of the gulf<sup>636</sup> (Szentkuthy must have found the term in Eddington's *The Nature of the Physical World*; on page 216 he underlined a passage on Schrödinger and put  $\Psi$  in a circle). When Szentkuthy analyzes the nature of desire (in the second half of the *Antipsyché Idylls*), he claims that what a man sees in a woman is not a human being, but only beauty. In other words, for men, women's humanity is unreal. According to the 1932 version, they consider it "dream and irreality." In the 1933 version, "dream and irreality" is crossed out and replaced by "Dirac's q-number, which is supposed to represent something non-numberly, an active non-number"<sup>637</sup> (passages on Dirac and p and q symbols are underlined in *The nature of the physical world* on page 210). Another example (also from the *Antipsyché Idylls*) can be found in the description of a man coming to a hotel at night. When morning comes, and the man decides to look out from his window, his glance does not stay at one point, but freely jumps around the elements of the landscape. In the 1932 version, the man's sight was compared to "a small lost piece of paper which dances about in a wind without viewpoint and does not stay on one fixed place." When Szentkuthy revised this fragment in 1933, he crossed it out and refashioned the description, so that the paper in the wind became an electron. In the final version, the sight is "like the celebrated electron: it is nowhere present, but the waves of probability fill the infinite space."<sup>638</sup>

<sup>634</sup> "Elpihent gyíkok helyén a csönd apró nyilai" becomes "elpihent gyíkok rövidzárlat-útjain a csönd apró Ampère-nyilai." "helyén" is crossed out and on the margin "rövidzárlat-útjain" is added. "Ampère" is an interlinear addition. *P I*, 223; PIM V. 5498/22/I/1, fol. 186r.

<sup>635</sup> "Mértani formákat" becomes "Minkowski-formákat." "Minkowski forms" is a marginal addition, "geometrical forms" are crossed out. *P I*, 162; PIM V. 5498/22/I/1, fol. 121v.

<sup>636</sup> "Finom ívélésére" becomes "Schrödingeri  $\Psi$ -piperéjére." "Schrödingeri  $\Psi$ -piperéjére" is a marginal addition. "Finom ívélésére" is crossed out. *P I*, 173; PIM V. 5498/22/I/1, fol. 132v.

<sup>637</sup> "Az álmat és irrealitást" is crossed out and becomes "egy Dirac-féle q-számot jelent, mely szám egyenesen arra való, hogy valami számszerűtlent, aktív nem-számot képviseljen," which is a marginal addition. *P I*, 234; PIM V. 5498/22/I/1, fol. 199r.

<sup>638</sup> "Egy kis elveszett papírszelet, amely táncol a szemponttalan szélben, anélkül hogy egy fix ponton megállapodna" is crossed out and becomes "olyan mint a divatos elektron: sehol sincs ugyan jelen, de

In August of 1933, Szentkuthy gave the first copybook to the printing house, after which he went to the summer university in Switzerland. When in Geneva, he bought a whole series of books on physics, but they do not show marks of reading (see 2.2.3). Additions and manuscript corrections from the following periods of stage 5 do not include references to physics. One year after the publication of *Prae*, in the summer of 1935, Szentkuthy bought and read Eddington's *New Pathways in Science*. He mentions the book in *Metaphor* but its influence is not visible in any of the works written after *Prae*.<sup>639</sup> Szentkuthy's interest in physics might have continued but not to the degree that he would go on to use physics terms in his novels.

To conclude, the impact of physics on *Prae* was limited to a short period of time: the summer of 1933. During that time, Szentkuthy was reading books on physics and simultaneously enhancing the manuscript of *Prae* with scientific terms. The corrections that Szentkuthy made in *Prae* attest to his strong fascination with physics, but after the summer of 1933, his enthusiasm ended as abruptly as it began.

## 6.4 German Philosophy

This section demonstrates that in the summer of 1933, aside from books on physics, Szentkuthy also read the works of Heidegger and Husserl, and that the experience of reading German philosophy inspired Szentkuthy to use German terms in the passages of *Prae* written at that time. Scholars have noticed that *Prae* contains references to Heidegger and Husserl,<sup>640</sup> but the genetic analysis specifies that the impact of German phenomenology is limited to the parts written in the first period of stage 5.

Two books that Szentkuthy read during his work on *Prae* are Heidegger's *Sein und Zeit* and Husserl's *Ideen*. We do not know exactly when Szentkuthy bought them, but evidence shows that he read them in the summer of 1933. Both philosophers were already famous at that time. Many years later, in 1966, Szentkuthy noted on the first page of *Sein und Zeit* "1933–1966," which clearly indicates that 1933 is the year he read the book. Below the date he wrote: "read on the Naphegy Hill, Derék St. 21 in the garden" (see 2.2.2). Derék Street 21 on Naphegy Hill in Buda was his then current address. "In the garden" implies that it must have been spring or summer. Given the fact that, starting from the 14<sup>th</sup> of July, Szentkuthy did not stay at Derék Street, he must have read the book between May and early July of 1933. This hypothesis is corroborated by the fact that a draft where Heidegger is mentioned is also from June of that same year.<sup>641</sup> The enthusiastic way in which Szentkuthy speaks of the

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valószínűségének hullámai betöltik a végtelen teret," which is added on the bottom of the page. *PI*, 205; PIM V. 5498/22/I/1, fol. 166r.

<sup>639</sup> *EMF*, 23, 217, 228; Szentkuthy, *Towards the One and Only Metaphor*, 24, 262, 275.

<sup>640</sup> Hanák, "Praefilozófia," 22; Bata, "A regény regénye," 4, 8; Nagy, *Az elérhetetlen szöveg*, 59, 86; Fekete, "Prae," 103.

<sup>641</sup> Heidegger's name appears in draft 3 (see 5.3). The folio (PIM V. 5498/23, fol. 3) contains dates 7 and 8 June.



concept of *Stimmung* in a letter to Hercz dated 1 August 1933 attests to a genuine interest in Heidegger's philosophy.<sup>642</sup>

As for Husserl, Szentkuthy did not date his copy of *Ideen*, but we can presume that he read it at the same time as he read Heidegger, since in the interviews he always recollects them together.<sup>643</sup> Thus, when in chapter 1 (written in July 1933) Touqué says that lately he has been reading "German phenomenologies," it is most likely a reference to Szentkuthy's own reading experience.<sup>644</sup>

The impact of German philosophy can be seen mainly in the usage of German terms in *Prae*.<sup>645</sup> Often in *Prae*, after an analysis, Szentkuthy refers to a fictional philosophical book. Many of these books have German titles, in which the influence of German terms is evident. Szentkuthy's idea of referring to non-existing books was already old, since the first reference is from stage 1 ("Kultur-attitude und sogenannte Reine Vernunft, übersetzt von Richard T. Klingel, Bonn, 1931").<sup>646</sup> However, in stages 1–4, these references are rare. Most of the references were written in the summer of 1933, in the additions to the rectos of the copybook, and to Touqué's monologue. Here is a full list: L. Brehle, *Heidegger'sche "Sich-vorweg-im-schon-sein-in" und Neue Sachlichkeit: Nichts als Sache*, Marburg, 1933 (addition 5),<sup>647</sup> R.A. Grabmann, *Neue Sachliche Christologie* and *Gott: Limes-Wirr-Warr* (addition 7),<sup>648</sup> Brehm, *Jungfrauenleben* (addition 11);<sup>649</sup> Klebenhayer, *Erotische Syllogistik des Spiegels I–II*, Göttingen, 1933 (addition 20);<sup>650</sup> Hartländer, *Über morbide Hyperontik und polylineare Zeroskopie als neurotische Dual-Konstanten*, Greifswald, 1933 (addition 21);<sup>651</sup> R. Klotz, *XX Jahrhundert: eine radikale Gegen-isolierung von I und E* (addition 31);<sup>652</sup> R. Trübner, *Erotik der Ortbestimmtheit und Asketik der Raumbestimmtheit* (addition 38).<sup>653</sup>

Some concepts, such as *Sich-vorweg-im-schon-sein-in* or *Um-uns-herum*, were taken directly from *Being and Time*. Both terms are underlined in Szentkuthy's copy: *Sich-vorweg-im-schon-sein-in* (analyzed in more detail in 5.3) on page 195 (§41), and *Um-uns-herum* on page 103 (§22).

Apart from a fictional bibliography, and borrowed terms, the parts written in the summer of 1933 also include words and concepts that Szentkuthy invented, most probably inspired by Heidegger's linguistic inventiveness. When in chapter 1 Touqué says that he has been reading "German phenomenologies," he mentions the concepts of *reine Und-heit* and *absolutes Sotum*, which echo Heidegger's neologisms.<sup>654</sup> One term was added as a marginal addition. In a

<sup>642</sup> Szentkuthy to Mária Hercz, 1 August 1933.

<sup>643</sup> *ÉF*, 82; *FH*, 359. See also *SZOB III*, 271.

<sup>644</sup> *P I*, 10.

<sup>645</sup> Many passages in Szentkuthy's works show that he was extremely sensitive to foreign languages. See the detailed analysis of German words in *Cynthia* (*SZOB II*, 42), Latin words in *Black Renaissance* (*SZOB I*, 179–80), or Catalan words in *Europa Minor* (*SZOB I*, 674–77).

<sup>646</sup> *P I*, 287.

<sup>647</sup> *P I*, 87.

<sup>648</sup> *P I*, 95.

<sup>649</sup> *P I*, 142.

<sup>650</sup> *P I*, 257.

<sup>651</sup> *P I*, 270.

<sup>652</sup> *P I*, 349.

<sup>653</sup> *P I*, 374.

<sup>654</sup> *P I*, 10. See also anecdote on "die reine Undheit," *FH*, 316.

passage from Touqué's monologue, we can read that adult desire does not concentrate only on woman but realizes itself in connection with the whole world, so that, in effect, the woman becomes unimportant. When in the summer of 1933 Szentkuthy was correcting this fragment, he added this comment to the margin: ("*Daseinschöpfende Sich-uneigentlich-machen der Frau*"?).<sup>655</sup> Furthermore, in addition 38, we can find a direct reference to Husserl and phenomenology,<sup>656</sup> whereas in addition 47, he mentions "eidetic reduction," which is Husserl's term.<sup>657</sup>

In the parts written after the summer of 1933, we find hardly any explicit references to German philosophy. Szentkuthy's next book, *Towards the One and Only Metaphor*, only briefly mentions Heidegger and his concept of *Geworfenheit*.<sup>658</sup> It looks as if, after a short period of fascination, Szentkuthy's enthusiasm for Heidegger and Husserl withered. Despite that, in a 1969 interview, he still expressed admiration for "Heidegger's crafty wisdoms,"<sup>659</sup> but later, his views changed radically and he became hostile towards philosophy (see the discussion in 5.3).

## 6.5 Switzerland

This section shows that after his trip to Switzerland in August and September of 1933 (see 3.7), Szentkuthy incorporated memories of alpine landscapes into the additions to part 3 of *Prae*, which he began to revise upon his return. The final example of immediate absorption is somewhat different from the previous ones, since it does not concern books but a travel experience. The theme of Switzerland (whose presence in *Prae* has not previously been noted) appears several times in the previous stages. In the *Antipsyché Idylls*, Mount Rigi is mentioned;<sup>660</sup> part 2 includes a brief reference to the Engadin Valley;<sup>661</sup> in part 3, a kiss between the Exeter parson and a girl occurs in Switzerland;<sup>662</sup> part 3 also includes a brief description of the Alps.<sup>663</sup> But the period after Szentkuthy's return from Geneva shows the increased presence of Swiss thematics. On the 17<sup>th</sup> of August, Szentkuthy gave the first copybook to the printing house and left for the summer course in Geneva. After the course ended, he went back to Budapest via the Alps (3–9 September). In Budapest, he transferred fresh memories from the alpine journey into the additions to the Exeter parson's diary.

Szentkuthy uses alpine landscape mainly as a source of comparisons. In addition 84 he describes a bedroom where the floor is slanted and covered with soft white material.

<sup>655</sup> *P I*, 108. PIM V. 5498/22/I/1, fol. 66v.

<sup>656</sup> *P I*, 372, 376.

<sup>657</sup> *P II*, 52. Addition 47 was attached to part 2, which was corrected in late 1933. However, since parts of the addition were already sketched in the summer of 1933 (see drafts PIM V. 5498/23, fols. 7, 9), it is possible that the addition was written before Szentkuthy began to correct part 2.

<sup>658</sup> *EMF*, 29, 66; Szentkuthy, *Towards the One and Only Metaphor*, 31, 76. *Geworfenheit* is also mentioned in *AK*, 287 and *SZOB III*, 415.

<sup>659</sup> "Szeretem Heidegger körmönfont bölcsességeit," *ÉF*, 27.

<sup>660</sup> *P I*, 200.

<sup>661</sup> *P II*, 297.

<sup>662</sup> *P II*, 484–86, 509, 560.

<sup>663</sup> *P II*, 357.

Szentkuthy names the floor “Engadin-secession.”<sup>664</sup> With this name he probably points out the floor’s similarity to the gentle and snowy mountain slopes in the Engadin Valley in Switzerland, where he stayed on 6–8 September. “Secession,” that is, art nouveau, might perhaps refer to the natural ornaments in the snow.

In addition 97, the Exeter parson reveals that when he cheats on his wife, it is always with many women. He never has only one lover, since one lover always leads to another. The numerous lovers are then compared to a road, viaduct, and train track crossing one other in alpine scenery, an image that Szentkuthy could have seen in Switzerland on the way back to Budapest.<sup>665</sup>

Addition 114 contains numerous references to Switzerland. At the beginning of the addition, the parson says that his perception of women is purely visual.<sup>666</sup> For instance, if a girl has one blue button she may be nothing to him but an encounter with the color blue. When describing the “blue girl’s” kisses, Szentkuthy uses a complex comparison that may have been inspired by his trip to Switzerland: “the Léman roller blind of the blue kisses on the broken windows of desire.”<sup>667</sup> The kisses and desire are thus analogous to a blue roller blind and a broken window. More precisely, the kisses are seen as a way towards the girl’s desire, just like a roller blind is a way towards the room. Since contact with the girl is a pure sensation of color, the parson feels that her kisses are blue, and—here comes the Swiss theme—he compares them to Lake Léman, which is the French name of Lake Geneva. Next, the parson goes on to compare the blue color of the girl to a nocturnal scene by Lake St. Moritz (situated in the Engadin Valley). In the night, when the moon is shining over the water, the snow and the glaciers around the lake are blue. The parson describes the landscape around the lake as “the blue ermine of the snow.”<sup>668</sup> After that, he quotes a fragment from his poem in prose *Dialogue with the Undialoguable*. The poem describes a conversation with “the blue woman” that takes place at the shore of Lake St. Moritz.<sup>669</sup> At the end of his meditation, the parson concludes that when he is in love, all other things seem to him absurd and incomprehensible. He then tells a short story which is supposed to illustrate the absurdity of the actions of a person in love. The story is about a man who puts poison into his fiancée’s drink and, while she is dying, commits suicide. In heaven, he convinces the girl’s guardian angel to keep her alive. Next, he returns to the earth and cheats on his fiancée with the rabbit from the tourist posters of St. Moritz.<sup>670</sup> Most likely, Szentkuthy refers here to the work of Alex W. Diggelmann. In the early 1930s, Diggelmann designed a tourist poster for the city of St. Moritz. The poster depicts a white rabbit standing in snow; below the rabbit we can see the name of the city “St. Moritz.” Szentkuthy must have seen the poster while staying in St. Moritz between 6 and 8 September 1933.

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<sup>664</sup> “Engadin-szecesszió” *P II*, 338.

<sup>665</sup> *P II*, 420.

<sup>666</sup> A similar idea that everything (human being, thought, morality) is only an image can be found in *P II*, 175–76. For the theme “woman as image” see also *P II*, 446–47.

<sup>667</sup> “Kék csókok Léman-rolója a vágy betört ablakain,” *P II*, 546.

<sup>668</sup> “A hó kék hermelinje,” *P II*, 547.

<sup>669</sup> *P II*, 547–48.

<sup>670</sup> *P II*, 548.

Finally, let us analyze addition 81, which Szentkuthy already drafted before he went to Switzerland. After his return, he wrote the material out and completed it with a mention of Lake Sils, which is also situated in the Engadin Valley. In the PIM archives, there are two drafts to the addition (see drafts 6 and 7).

«JUANUS ETHICUS»

Egy Don Juan-ábrázolás (= az exeteri pap?), melynek lényege,  
hogy etikai Midás = minden  
szeretőjéhez végzetesen-erős  
etikai lekötöttség kapcsolja;  
azért van sok nővel dolga,  
mert etikai lény. Etikai  
hipokondria → etikai abszolútizmust termel. Párhuzam:  
légies-mondain maîtresse-hálózat + vad pánetika

Nőve(3) stádium:

I. megismerés +  
séta = táj + érzékiség

II. coitus: sötét fiaskók stb.

III. nő = etika, csak-etikai lény!

FONTOS!

**Draft 6** First draft to *Juanus Ethicus* (PIM V. 5498/23, fol. 8)<sup>671</sup>

<sup>671</sup> The draft is written mainly in black ink except for the curved line, the word “FONTOS!” (“IMPORTANT!”), the arrows, and the circle around “3,” which are written in red crayon.

## «JUANUS ETHICUS»

Description of Don Juan (= the Exeter parson?) who is essentially an ethical Midas = he is connected to all his lovers by a fatally strong ethical bind; he has to be involved with many women, because he is an ethical being. Ethical hypochondria → produces ethical absolutism. Parallel: airy-mondain maîtresse-network + wild panethics

③ stages with a woman:

I. getting to know + walk = landscape + sensuality

II. coïtus: dark failures, etc.

III. woman = ethics, purely ethical being!

← IMPORTANT!

### Translation of draft 6

Draft 6 is not dated but Szentkuthy did date other drafts on the same folio. A draft below is dated 28 June 1933. The following drafts are dated 29 June, 1 July, and 16 July. The draft to Juanus Ethicus is in the left upper corner. Since the dates increase as we go down the page, we can conclude that the draft was sketched at the end of June 1933. When Szentkuthy sketched this draft, he was thus still correcting the first copybook.

The draft consists of two parts. The first part briefly presents the idea of Juanus Ethicus. The sketch begins with the words: “description of Don Juan (= the Exeter parson?) who is essentially an ethical Midas.” Being an “ethical Midas” means that just as everything King Midas touched turned to gold, every woman that Juanus Ethicus touches becomes an ethical issue for him. In other words, his romances always end up with ethical questions. The second part of the sketch enumerates three phases of Juan’s romance: 1) “getting to know + walk = landscape and sensuality”; 2) “intercourse: dark failures, etc.”; and 3) “woman = ethics, purely ethical being!”

The question in the brackets “(= the Exeter parson?)” implies that, at the end of June, Szentkuthy was not sure how the theme of Juanus Ethicus could be related to the composition of *Prae*, or inserted into the parson’s monologue, and the question mark indicates this uncertainty.

The theme of *Juanus Ethicus* is continued on another folio (see draft 7).

a “JUANUS ETHICUS” témához: Juan látja, amint két volt szeretője megöli egymást: mindkét nő mélyen etikai lény és most bestiák – Webster stílus?  
Manréza-elvek? } +  
éjjel, egyetlen gyertya: minden álomerős erkölcs =  
Juan is, a nők is  
és mégis vér  
és mégis pusztulás

**Draft 7** Second draft to *Juanus Ethicus* (PIM V. 5498/23, fol. 7)

to the theme of “JUANUS ETHICUS”: Juan sees two his ex-lovers killing each other: both women are profoundly ethical beings and now they are beasts – Webster style?  
Loyola principles? } +  
in the night, the sole candle: everything is dream strong morality =  
both Juan and the women  
and still blood  
and still death

#### Translation of draft 7

The second draft is not dated, but other drafts on this folio are. The following notes and drafts are dated 13 July, 14 July, 27 July, and 10 August, which implies that the draft must have been written in mid-July. The draft begins with the words “to the theme ‘JUANUS ETHICUS’,” which indicates that it was written after the draft where the main idea is presented. The draft describes a scene from Juan’s life. In the scene Juan watches his ex-lovers kill each other. The scene might have been inspired by Szentkuthy’s personal experience, as at the time he was engaged in love affair with two women (see 4.3.2). In the first period of stage 5, there is no further mention of them, except for the expression “*Juanus Logicus*” in Touqué’s monologue. Its similarity to “*Juanus Ethicus*” might imply that the theme was on Szentkuthy’s mind.<sup>672</sup> When Szentkuthy left for Geneva in mid-August, the drafts were sketched, but it was not obvious if and where they would be used in *Prae*.

After returning from Geneva, Szentkuthy started to correct the parson’s diary; during the correction he completed it with additions. On page 9 of the diary (in Szentkuthy’s numbering),

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<sup>672</sup> *P I*, 167; PIM V. 5498/22/I/1, fol. 125v. “(*Juanus Logicus*?)” is added to the top of the page.

he attached an addition about Juanus Ethicus.<sup>673</sup> The part of the monologue to which the addition is attached concerns the parson's adoration of money. The parson (who is quite clearly Szentkuthy's alter ego) explains that he loves money not because he is a materialist but because luxury brings to his mind fairytales from his childhood. For this reason, his lust for money is ethically good. The addition starts with the words "whatever I touch becomes an ethical issue like Midas (...) this is the case of money and of course this is the case of women."<sup>674</sup> In this way Szentkuthy abandons the theme of money and shifts to the question of women. The Juanus Ethicus material is framed as one of the parson's literary projects. Juanus Ethicus is thus not the parson himself, as Szentkuthy envisioned in draft 6, but a character invented by him. It looks as if Szentkuthy did not want to expand drafts 6 and 7 and that is why he incorporated them into the novel only as a plan. The parson uses the conditional tense, which indicates that the project has not been yet realized: "I would like to write something about Juanus Ethicus," "I would describe the dark typology of his love adventures."<sup>675</sup> The following text combines the material of drafts 6 and 7. The parson first presents the character of Juanus Ethicus, after which he discusses three phases in Juanus's love affairs. Then, after proposing that "the whole short story could be finished in the following way," Szentkuthy describes the scene he sketched in draft 7: two ex-lovers kill each other "as in English bloody dramas," that is, in Webster's style, as the draft informs us.<sup>676</sup>

The point of this analysis is that when Szentkuthy describes the three phases of Juanus's love affair, he uses a Swiss landscape as a setting. Let us first recapitulate what these phases are. In the first phase, Juanus becomes interested in a woman. In the second, the actual affair takes place. In the third phase, the affair is over and Juanus is left with ethical questions. In the first draft, the first phase is noted in the following way: "getting to know + walk = landscape and sensuality." The first encounter is thus associated with a landscape. This idea is developed in the addition: "the first phase, when Juanus begins to like a woman for there is a wonderful landscape or a room behind her."<sup>677</sup> Falling in love with a woman is thus strongly linked to a perception of the beauty of a landscape. Now, while the draft does not specify the identity of the landscape, in the addition, the landscape turns out to be Lake Sils in the Engadin Valley. When imagining Juanus's story, the parson can almost hear the "hum (...) of Lake Sils" and he refers to the lake as "the blue kiss-gills of the water of Lake Sils."<sup>678</sup> This may in all likelihood be Szentkuthy's memory of Lake Sils, which he saw on 7 September 1933. In the addition, the parson hears the lake in the afternoon. This might also be Szentkuthy's personal experience, since in the postcard to his parents he says they spent the afternoon with Dolly sitting at the shore of the lake.<sup>679</sup> Apparently, the beautiful landscape

<sup>673</sup> PIM V. 5498/22/II, fol. 22r; *P II*, 329–30.

<sup>674</sup> "Amihez nyúlok, valóban Midász módján rögtön etikai dologgá válik. (...) Így van pénzzel, így van persze nővel." *P II*, 329.

<sup>675</sup> "Kedvem volna megírni valami *Juanus Ethicus*-féle témát," "Leírnám szerelmi kalandjainak sötét tipológiáját." *P II*, 329.

<sup>676</sup> "Az egész novellát azzal lehetne befejezni," "angol vérdrámák szerint." *P II*, 330.

<sup>677</sup> "Első fázis, mikor a nő megtetszik, mert valami csodálatos táj vagy szoba van mögötte." *P II*, 329.

<sup>678</sup> "A Sils-i tó (...) zugását," "a Sils-i vizek kék csók-kopoltyúi." *P II*, 329.

<sup>679</sup> Szentkuthy to Lajos Pfisterer, postcard, 7 September 1933.

inspired him to the degree that he wanted to include mention of it in the text he was writing back in Budapest.

The character of Juanus Ethicus is briefly mentioned in two other additions (84 and 97), and even in *Cynthia*, the fifth part of *Orpheus*, which was written in 1938.<sup>680</sup> Switzerland appears once more in *Prae* in the *Fifth Non-Prae-diagonal* (addition 56), which mentions Geneva, Park La Grange, and a villa, which might perhaps be the famous Villa Diodati.<sup>681</sup> Most likely, the addition was written in late 1933. Switzerland is also briefly referred to in *Cynthia*.<sup>682</sup> Apart from these examples, Switzerland does not appear in Szentkuthy's oeuvre anymore. Its main influence is thus limited to the period following the summer course in Geneva.

## 6.6 Conclusions

The analysis just concluded reveals a specific tendency in Szentkuthy's writing: soon after he comes across a theme that interests him—be it Bergson's philosophy, modern physics, Heidegger, Husserl, or Swiss landscapes—he spontaneously incorporates the new theme into whatever text he would have been concurrently working on. Thus, Bergson, whom Szentkuthy read in June 1932, inspired some parts of the *Antipsyché Idylls* written in July of 1932. Modern physics, as well as Heidegger's and Husserl's philosophy, which Szentkuthy read in the summer of 1933, were inspirational for the corrections and additions to the first copybook that Szentkuthy revised at the same time. The Alpine landscapes that Szentkuthy saw during his trip back home from Geneva in September of 1933 influenced some of the additions to the Exeter parson's diary, which Szentkuthy corrected after his return to Budapest. The PIM archives do not include any plans that would imply that the incorporation of these sources was intended. This indicates that the incorporation of the sources was not only immediate, but probably also spontaneous: Szentkuthy did not plan to include them until he stumbled upon them. Moreover, after the first intoxication, Szentkuthy abandons the theme and does not use it anymore, or he uses it only rarely.

The present analysis was possible to carry out due to the fact that Szentkuthy dated both his books and the manuscript of *Prae*, as well as reported on his experiences in postcards and letters. The idea that Szentkuthy's writing might be characterized as immediate absorption occurred to me by chance, when I discovered that the dates in Bergson's books coincide with those on the versos of the *Antipsyché Idylls*. Having made this discovery, I examined the text of the *Antipsyché Idylls* from the perspective of Bergson's philosophy; as a result, it turned out that this particular fragment of *Prae* was strongly influenced by Bergson. I continued the investigation by comparing dates in Szentkuthy's books with dates in the manuscript of *Prae*; in this way, I was able to specify which parts of *Prae* were influenced by the themes of modern physics, German philosophy, and Switzerland. In the future, further analysis could be

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<sup>680</sup> *P II*, 338; *P II*, 423; *SZOB II*, 181.

<sup>681</sup> *P II*, 153–58.

<sup>682</sup> *SZOB II*, 149–50.



continued similarly. When more drafts are discovered, it will perhaps be possible to better determine the chronology of the manuscript of *Prae*. As for Szentkuthy's diary, we might find more information there on his experiences during the writing of *Prae*. Consequently, it will be possible to compare Szentkuthy's readerly and personal experiences to parts of the manuscript that originate from the same time. As a result of such a study, new, unknown sources of *Prae* might be revealed.

## 7 Conclusions

The goal of this thesis has been to reconstruct the genesis of Miklós Szentkuthy's novel *Prae* on the basis of previously unknown documents that I discovered in the archives of the Petőfi Literary Museum in Budapest. The documents include the manuscript of *Prae*, drafts to *Prae*, diary notes, marginal notes in Szentkuthy's books, and letters and postcards. Although the material has been available to scholars, it has never been studied or commented upon. In my thesis, I have presented and analyzed the archival material with the help of the concepts and methodological tools of genetic criticism (works by de Biasi, Debray Genette, Ferrer, Grésillon, and Hay). At the outset of this study, I asked three questions: 1. How did Szentkuthy write *Prae*? 2. How does knowledge of *Prae*'s genesis challenge the previous conceptions of the work? 3. How can this knowledge be made useful in the exegesis of the novel? We can now give the following answers.

1. How did Szentkuthy write *Prae*? First and foremost, my thesis establishes a writing process chronology. Within the years 1928–1934, it is possible to discern five subsequent stages of work. In the first stage (autumn 1928–October 1931), while still a university student, Szentkuthy wrote the core of part 1. In the second stage, during Szentkuthy's sojourn to London (late 1931–March 1932), part 1 was completed and the core of part 2 was written. In Budapest, during the third stage (April–late 1932), Szentkuthy completed part 1 with three additions and wrote the final section of part 2. In the fourth stage (December 1932–May 1933), he wrote the core of part 3. In the fifth stage (May 1933–April 1934), he revised the whole manuscript and completed it with more than one hundred additions. A chronology of the writing process is completed with numerous data concerning Szentkuthy's biography, which makes my thesis an important contribution to the readers of *Prae* who are also interested in Szentkuthy's personal life.

Besides a chronology of his writing process, the thesis distinguishes three principal particularities of Szentkuthy's writing method. The first concerns the additions that he attached to the manuscript in the final stage of composition. In May of 1933, after finishing work on part 3, Szentkuthy thought that his novel was complete. However, as he began to review the manuscript, he became disappointed with its quality. At the same time, new readerly and personal experiences inspired him to continue writing. He wrote his new ideas on small pieces of paper and attached them to the manuscript with paper clips. Thus, having written the core of *Prae*, starting from May 1933 until February 1934, he expanded the text with more than one hundred additions. In effect, the final text increased by half its size: one third of the final version was written in the final writing stage. The additions introduced new themes to the novel, such as physics, German philosophy, modern architecture, polyamorousness, and novel writing. The themes of physics and German philosophy were inspired by the books that Szentkuthy read in the summer of 1933. The theme of polyamorousness was probably Szentkuthy's attempt to deal with his own personal situation, as in the summer of 1933 he was involved in a love relation with three women at the same time. The theme of novel writing was most likely inspired by Szentkuthy's reflections on his own writing process. A minor but certainly interesting aspect concerning the additions is an

incoherent relation to the main text that I have observed in additions 20 and 43. For instance, in addition 20, the layout of Leatrice's room changes. In the main text, the windows of Leatrice's room open onto the sea, but in the addition the windows disappear and a wall appears in their place. Such an incoherence might be seen as paradox typical of postmodern novels, but I contend that Szentkuthy was either reluctant to edit the final text, or simply did not notice the incoherence due to an inadequate revision of his own text.

The second particularity in Szentkuthy's writing process is an operation that I name "obscuring suppression." This operation consists in the suppression of parts of draft material that contain information essential for understanding the writer's idea. As a result of obscuring suppression, the final text becomes therefore more concise but also less understandable than the draft. My analysis shows that, less than being an intentional technique, obscuring suppression is a result of Szentkuthy's predilection for concise and dense expression. In other words, he did not make his text obscure on purpose, but deleted the important parts by accident. The thesis analyzes two examples of obscuring suppression. The first example is a fragment from chapter 4 of *Prae*. The fragment describes a scene that is supposed to illustrate the way pain develops in the unconscious of a man after his beloved woman leaves him. The drafts to this fragment include three important similes that were suppressed in the final text. In effect, the final text seems rather elliptic, but analysis of the drafts shows that Szentkuthy had a clear and precise vision in his mind. The second example of obscuring suppression is a draft to an addition from chapter 2. The draft presents a system of correspondences between various concepts, including a term from Heidegger's *Being and Time*. In the final text, however, the relations between the concepts are not clearly indicated, and it is impossible to understand how the term is related to the rest of the text.

The third particularity in Szentkuthy's writing is his tendency of spontaneously incorporating his actual reading or personal experiences into whatever text he was working on concurrently. I analyze four cases of "immediate absorption," as I call this act. Bergson's works, which Szentkuthy read in June of 1932, inspired the parts of *Prae* (chapter 4) written in July of 1932. Modern physics, as well as Heidegger's and Husserl's philosophy, which Szentkuthy read in the summer of 1933, were both inspirational for the corrections and additions to the first copybook of *Prae*, which Szentkuthy revised at that time. Alpine landscapes, which Szentkuthy saw during his trip back home from the summer school in Geneva in September of 1933, influenced some of the additions to part 3 of *Prae*, which he corrected after his return to Budapest.

2. The second question posed at the beginning of this thesis is how knowledge of *Prae*'s genesis challenges previous conceptions of the work. As for the writing process chronology, the thesis clears up four common misconceptions. Firstly, my analysis clearly shows that Szentkuthy finished *Prae* only in the spring of 1934, not in 1932, as is usually presumed, or has been argued by some scholars. Secondly, the archival material reveals that Szentkuthy stayed in London for only five months, not the whole year, as is usually stated. Thirdly, Szentkuthy's trip to Geneva took place in the summer of 1933, not in 1935, as biographical sketches usually claim. Fourthly, after Geneva, Szentkuthy and Dolly did not visit Lake

Garda—as Szentkuthy later claimed—but traveled via the Swiss Alps back to Budapest. The trip to Lake Garda did not take place until 1937.

Another thing that the thesis shows is that the German terms used by Szentkuthy are neither bluff nor stylistic embellishment, as is sometimes argued, but parts of a precise conceptual system that Szentkuthy had in mind, sketched, but did not develop in detail in the final text.

As to the sources of *Prae*, scholars have noted the influence of Bergson, physics, and German philosophy, but their observations have not been supported by more detailed analyses. The present thesis analyzes notes and dates in Szentkuthy's books and specifies that the influence of sources is limited to particular fragments of *Prae*. Hence, Bergsonian themes are to be found in the *Antipsyché Idylls*, a part of *Prae* written in 1932 and inspired in part by four books by Henri Bergson. The influence of physics is limited to the additions and corrections made to the first copybook, which Szentkuthy revised in the first period of stage 5, that is, June–August of 1933. At the same time, he also read works by Heidegger and Husserl, which inspired him to use German terms in the additions and corrections to the copybook.

3. How can knowledge of *Prae*'s genesis be used in an exegesis of the novel? This question is particularly important since, until now, one of the greatest barriers occluding the reception of *Prae* has been the immense difficulty of the novel. *Prae* is an unquestionable masterpiece but, due to its difficulty, it remains widely unread and unstudied. At the beginning of this thesis, I argued that what we urgently need is a scholarly edition or reading guide to *Prae*. Such work would save readers and researchers many years of struggle, and, as I envisaged, it would pave the way for a more advanced and detailed exploration of Szentkuthy's novel. There are three ways in which the results of the present thesis can contribute to this future task.

Firstly, it will be important to make a distinction between the main text and the additions. Analysis of the additions suggests that they can be treated as a thematically uniform set. Consequently, in the future, it will be possible to study the development of Szentkuthy's ideas by comparing the different ways they are presented in the two layers of the text. It will also be possible to concentrate on individual additions and investigate how Szentkuthy expanded or commented on a particular passage in the main text to which the addition was added. In the Appendix to this thesis, I have included an exhaustive list of the additions.

Secondly, my thesis shows that is worth studying the drafts as they present a richer and more complete record of the writer's imagination and ideas. In this thesis, I analyze only two fragments of *Prae* but when Szentkuthy's diary and other uncatalogued material from PIM will be opened to researchers, more drafts to *Prae* that will provide us with new material to study Szentkuthy's inner world might be discovered.

Thirdly, it will be useful to compare particular fragments of the novel to Szentkuthy's readerly and personal experiences from the time the fragments were written. Comparison of the dates on the versos of the manuscript with the dates in Szentkuthy's books, letters, and postcards has allowed me to specify which parts of the manuscript were influenced by Bergson, modern physics, German philosophers, and Swiss landscapes. If the future research proceeds in a similar way, it is probable that more sources to *Prae* will be revealed.

To recapitulate these conclusions, in the present thesis I provide new information on Szentkuthy's *Prae*, I challenge and complete old conceptions about the novel, and I open possibilities for future research. This last aspect seems to me especially important. I would like to finish this thesis by expressing the hope that, in the future, more researchers will be interested in studying *Prae*. If *Prae* is to appear in a scholarly edition, it can only be the result of the joint undertaking of many scholars.

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## Appendix 1. History of the Writing Process: Synoptic Table

The following table presents phases in the genesis of *Prae* and provides dates and corresponding operations.

Phase of genesis	Time	Operations
Pre-compositional phase	Early childhood–Autumn 1928	General planning, failed attempts at writing
Compositional phase	Autumn 1928–April 1934	
Stage 1	Autumn 1928–October 1931	Textualization of the core of part 1 (first copybook and part of the second copybook)
Stage 2	Late 1931–March 1932	Beginning of the work on part 2 (oblong sheets) Completion of the second copybook
Stage 3	April 1932–late 1932	Additions to the copybooks: <i>Touqué's monologue</i> , <i>Antipsyché Idylls</i> , <i>Veronica and Ulva episode</i> . Completion of part 2
Stage 4	December 1932–May 1933	Textualization of part 3 (oblong sheets)
Stage 5 = Pre-publishing phase	May 1933–April 1934	Additions to the manuscript Correction of the manuscript
Period 1	May–August 1933	Edition of the first copybook
Period 2	September–October 1933	Edition of the oblong sheets (part 3)
Period 3	November–December 1933	Edition of the oblong sheets (part 2)
Period 4	January–April 1934	Edition of the second copybook Choosing the cover
Publication phase	1934–2004	
	1 May 1934	Publication of four fragments from <i>Prae</i> in <i>Válasz</i>
	3 May 1934	Publication of <i>Prae</i>
	Beginning of June 1934	Publication of the <i>Table of contents</i>
	1980	Publication of <i>Prae</i> , second edition, revised and edited by Mária Tompa
	2004	Publication of <i>Prae</i> , third (posthumous) edition with no further changes
	2013	Publication of <i>Prae</i> online

## Appendix 2. List of Additions

The aim of the table below is to provide a reference guide for readers interested in knowing which parts of *Prae* were attached to the manuscript as additions. I consider an addition to be a part of the manuscript that was written on one or more separate pieces of paper and attached or inserted to the manuscript, as well as parts of the manuscript written on the versos (additions 1, 4, 15, 16, 18, 27, 40, 111, 112). What the present list does not include are shorter corrections and completions written in the margins or between the lines. Although most of them certainly must have been written in the period 1933–34, giving them the status of additions would be problematic. If we regard the marginal and interlinear insertions as additions, all completions and all corrections, no matter how insignificant they may be, should be included here. As a consequence, the number of items on the list would easily increase up to several thousand or more. Therefore, the main criterion whether a given fragment is to be considered an addition is the place where it is written. All texts written on separate pieces of paper or verso sides of the manuscript pages are considered additions, while the texts written on the margins are not. The table lists the additions in the order as they appear in the printed text. Each addition is given a number that is indicated in the first column. The second column gives the first and last words of a given fragment, so that the addition to the text is easily identifiable. For some additions discussed in this study I have coined titles, each of which are given in italics. The third column shows the location of each addition in *Prae* (in the second edition), and in the manuscript. Folio numbers refer to rectos, unless otherwise indicated. The fourth is reserved for additional comments, such as Szentkuthy's notes, on the versos or corresponding drafts. The reader interested in a particular fragment from *Prae* may proceed by consulting it with the table and checking whether the fragment contains any additions. He should first find the chapter and then check whether the pages of the particular fragment are listed in the table.

Nº	Title Incipit Excipit	Location	Notes
<b>Chapter 1</b>			
1.	<i>Chapter 1</i>  Leville-Touqué <i>Antipsyché</i> című ... néhány elkövetkezendő hónapjában.	<i>P I</i> , 7–42  PIM V. 5498/22/I/1, fol. 1–34	<p>This introductory addition was originally written on the verso sides of the beginning of the first copybook. Later, when the pages of the copybook fell out, the opening pages were put inversely, so that versos became rectos, while the beginning of chapter 2 (originally the beginning of the whole book) was considered verso. Starting from folio 35, the original order of recto and verso is retained.</p> <p>When Szentkuthy began to write this addition, Touqué's monologue (no. 4) had already been written. Since, originally, Szentkuthy wrote this addition on the verso sides of the copybook, at some point he reached Touqué's monologue, which was also written on the versos. For this reason, the final pages of the addition were written on separate pieces of paper (folios 30–34).</p> <p>Draft of <i>P I</i>, 33–8 (Touqué's third article) can be found in PIM V. 5498/23, fol. 8.</p> <p>A brief reference to Touqué's article can be found in PIM V. 5498/23, fol. 9.</p>
2.	Touqué tisztában volt ... után az oszcillátor.	<i>P I</i> , 23–26  PIM V. 5498/22/I/1, fol. 16–19	
<b>Chapter 2</b>			
3.	Különben nagyon tanulságos ... „kokotoid” arcél elemeivel.	<i>P I</i> , 58–62  PIM V. 5498/22/I/1, fol. 12–15	
4.	<i>Touqué's monologue</i>  Az volt a benyomása ... centruma aktív ős- szofizma.	<i>P I</i> , 79–241  PIM V. 5498/22/I/1, fol. 35v–206v	<p>An early addition written on the verso sides of the copybook, probably in the spring of 1932.</p> <p>This addition has a complex construction. Within it we can find additions 5–14, while addition 14 includes additions 15, 16, and 17, which is probably its later continuation. Additions 18 and 19 are later continuations of addition 4.</p>

5.	<i>Interpolation</i>  ( <i>Nem ezt; nem ... – Sache</i> ”. Marburg. 1933.]	<i>P I</i> , 84–87  PIM V. 5498/22/I/1, fol. 38–41	A draft can be found in PIM V. 5498/23, fol. 6.
6.	Touqué egész élete ... kamaszkor elmúltával élvezhetetlen.	<i>P I</i> , 89–90  PIM V. 5498/22/I/1, fol. 44–45	
7.	Az állócsillagok merev ... nonszensz” kettőségét látja.	<i>P I</i> , 94–98  PIM V. 5498/22/I/1, fol. 52–56	
8.	<i>First Non-Prae- diagonal</i>  ( <i>Csodálkozott, hogy ilyen ... kissé izzadt szövést...</i> )	<i>P I</i> , 102–6  PIM V. 5498/22/I/1, fol. 61–65	
9.	<i>Second Non-Prae- diagonal</i>  ( <i>...A szalvétagyűű először ... bokornál a karika!...</i> )	<i>P I</i> , 117–26  PIM V. 5498/22/I/1, fol. 80–89	
<b>Chapter 3</b>			
10.	mintha három fokozatot ... és életszerű érzékiségét”.)	<i>P I</i> , 131–32  PIM V. 5498/22/I/1, fol. 93–94	
11.	<i>Third Non-Prae- diagonal</i>  ( <i>...Elkezdte hát keresni ... gyóntam. De azért...</i> ”)	<i>P I</i> , 139–48  PIM V. 5498/22/I/1, fol. 100–109	In the summer of 1933, Szentkuthy rewrote the beginning of this addition and gave it to the printing house in order to receive a typesetting model. Both the rewritten page and the text from the printing house survived. The manuscript is in PIM V. 5498/22/I. The typesetting model is in PIM V. 5498/23/a.

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| 12. | (a „lélegzés” persze csak ...<br>összeálló kagyló-<br>vajúdásnak). | <i>P I</i> , 155<br><br>PIM V. 5498/22/I/1, fol. 115 | On the verso side of the folio, Szentkuthy wrote:<br>“1933 július 18.-án írtam: Szüleimnél, ahol évek óta<br>nem írtam – Szüleim → San Martino → London →<br>Gröbel-penzió → Derék u. → Szüleim!”<br>(I wrote it on 18 July 1933 at my parents’ where I<br>haven’t written for years – My parents → San Martino<br>→ London → Gröbel Hostel → Derék St. → My<br>parents!) |
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| 13. | matematikai<br>logikakönyvekben<br>lehet ...<br>magától-magába<br>szökés révén); | <i>P I</i> , 173–74<br><br>PIM V. 5498/22/I/1, fol. 133 |
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#### Chapter 4

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| 14. | <i>Antipsyché Idylls</i><br><br>Sík és tér...<br>vágy mágikus<br>vágatása. | <i>P I</i> , 177–235<br><br>PIM V. 5498/22/I/1, fol. 136–200 | <p>This early addition was written in the summer of 1932 and attached to the middle of Touqué’s monologue. During the correction of the manuscript in 1933, Szentkuthy made three comments on the versos:</p> <p>1. “Mikor azt az oldalt írtam (1932 nyarán), még halvány sejtelmem nem volt az Einstein-féle gravitáció-elméletéről, úgyhogy affektációból megjegyzem, hogy hatásról szó sem lehet. 1933 július 29. Basaharcz” (When I was writing this page (in the summer of 1932) I had no idea of Einstein’s theory of gravity, so I observe with affectation that we absolutely cannot talk about influence here. 29 July 1933, Basaharcz). PIM V. 5498/22/I/1, fol. 163v. Szentkuthy refers to the passage on <i>P I</i>, 202–3.</p> <p>2. “Ezeket az oldalakat Vilma Királynő út 28. (Eppinger-villa) könyvtárszobájában írtam: itt laktam krb. 10 napig 1932 nyarán, Gröbel-penzió után (Hercz Mária Svájcba-utazása után) és Derék u. előtt.”<br/>(I wrote these pages in the library room at Vilma Királynő Avenue 28 (Eppinger villa): I lived there for about 10 days in the summer of 1932, after the Gröbel Hostel (after Mária Hercz left for Switzerland) and before Derék St.). PIM V. 5498/22/I/1, fol. 178v. Szentkuthy refers to the passage on <i>P I</i>, 215–16.</p> <p>3. “Ezeket a lapokat Vilma-királynő út 28. ú.n. “téli kert”-jében délelőtt (1932 nyár) írtam (“Vierteljahrschrift”-vásárlás után): ott most már (legalább is a felén) fürdőszobát építettek. 1933 július 31.” (I wrote these pages in the morning (summer of 1932), in the so-called “orangery” at Vilma Királynő Avenue (after buying “Vierteljahrschrift”): presently a bathroom has been built there (at least in one half of the room). 31 July 1933.) PIM V. 5498/22/I/1, fol. 185v. Szentkuthy refers to the passage on <i>P I</i>, 221–22.</p> <p>Drafts to the addition can be found in: <i>FTJ</i>, 102–3 and PIM V. 5498/23/1.</p> |
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15.	(A hullamél a geometrizálás... adott igazságszerű izomzatot.)	<i>PI</i> , 197–98  PIM V. 5498/22/I/1, fol. 158v	
16.	Ha új nővel... volt a régi nőben.	<i>PI</i> , 216–17  PIM V. 5498/22/I/1, fol. 179v	
17.	Ahogy a vágy kötött... az előbbi hullámok stb.	<i>PI</i> , 235–37  PIM V. 5498/22/I/1, fol. 200–202	The addition is a continuation of addition 14 on the same folio where addition 14 ends. I propose giving it a separate number because there seems to be a rupture in the text, after which the text is written with a different, thin pen. It includes almost no corrections. Both features are characteristic of the additions made in 1933. It is therefore possible that the final pages of addition 14 were written in 1933.
18.	rend és szabálytalanság... <i>Langhofer, 1929. Leipzig.)</i>	<i>PI</i> , 241–44  PIM V. 5498/22/I/1, fol. 206v–208v	The addition continues Touqué’s monologue (addition 4) but it is written with a new, thin pen, which is typical of 1933, and unlike earlier texts, it includes no corrections. Hence I propose to consider it a separate addition.
19.	Különben nem kell... helyzet. Leatrice! Leatrice!	<i>PI</i> , 244–46  PIM V. 5498/22/I/1, fol. 208–9	The addition continues the previous one (addition 18) but since it is not on verso sides but on separate papers, I propose to consider it a separate addition.
<b>Chapter 5</b>			
20.	Tulajdonképpen a szerelem hármashangzatával ... <i>Spiegels I–II. Göttingen, 1933.)</i>	<i>PI</i> , 252–57  PIM V. 5498/22/I/1, fol. 46–50	
21.	A két hasonlat közül ... műve, Greifswald, 1933.)	<i>PI</i> , 266–70  PIM V. 5498/22/I/1, fol. 67–70	

22.	Ez a két Leatrice- kép ... two Noble Kinsmen.	<i>P I</i> , 275–77 PIM V. 5498/22/I/1, fol. 74–76	
23.	ezek az idegenforgalmi plakátok ... algebrai jegy az Adrián.	<i>P I</i> , 304–5 PIM V. 5498/22/I/1, fol. 120	On the verso of folio 120, Szentkuthy wrote: “1933 május 22. írtam” (Written on 22 May 1933).
24.	Végeredményben mit is ... alapja a pozitív élettan.	<i>P I</i> , 313–15 PIM V. 5498/22/I/1, fol. 128–30	
25.	addig, míg fordult ... és a legédesebb maché- logizáláshoz.	<i>P I</i> , 324 PIM V. 5498/22/I/1, fol. 205	
26.	Hogy a „káosz” vajútda ... vagy kihagyó öngyújtó.	<i>P I</i> , 324–25 PIM V. 5498/22/I/1, fol. 205	
27.	Régi technika mindenesetre ... találja meg az igazságot.	<i>P I</i> , 336–38 PIM V. 5498/22/I/1, fol. 215v– 216v	
28.	Hogy a „szépség” fogalmát ... összehívta a konferenciát, melyen	<i>P I</i> , 336–37 PIM V. 5498/22/I/1, fol. 217	The addition is placed within addition 27.
29.	Az élet vajon elvont ... felszerelt belgyógyászati klinikákon?	<i>P I</i> , 337 PIM V. 5498/22/I/1, fol. 217	The addition is placed within addition 27.
30.	Látszólag Leatrice emlékképeit ... képmutatás, epicomorphia hypocritica.	<i>P I</i> , 340–43 PIM V. 5498/22/I/1, fol. 218–21	On the verso side of folio 218, Szentkuthy wrote: “1933 június 8. írtam (1-4 old)” (written on 8 June 1933 (pages 1–4))  Draft and drawing can be found in: PIM V. 5498/23, fol. 3.
31.	A watt nélküli zérus- futás ... grandiózus munka-zéró érvényesült.	<i>P I</i> , 348–50 PIM V. 5498/22/I/1, fol. 225–26	



32.	de ahogy nem ... meg öltöztetőbabákat kivágni.	<i>P I</i> , 353–54  PIM V. 5498/22/I/1, fol. 230	
33.	Touquet naivabb kollégái ... ou amour carnapisant.”)	<i>P I</i> , 354–56  PIM V. 5498/22/I/1, fol. 232–33	On the verso side of folio 232, Szentkuthy wrote: “1933 június 14. írtam ½ 4 – ¼ 5 ó-ig, Vazul napján (szerda)” (written on 14 June 1933 between 3.30 and 4.15 a.m., Vazul’s day (Wednesday))
34.	Mintha az új epikában ... ezen határok között?	<i>P I</i> , 360  PIM V. 5498/22/I/1, fol. 236	
35.	Azonban rögtön észrevevessük ... értelmes-fiktív magányát stb.)	<i>P I</i> , 360–61  PIM V. 5498/22/I/1, fol. 238	
36.	Előbb megkülönböztettük az új ... hanem végzetszerű átlényegülés.)	<i>P I</i> , 362–63  PIM V. 5498/22/I/1, fol. 240	
37.	Egy sienai keresztkútról megtudnánk ... Hegel- szabású „kultur- schematische Defloreatio”.	<i>P I</i> , 363–64  PIM V. 5498/22/I/1, fol. 240	
38.	Fullasztó még elképzelni ... pökhendiséggel a földgolyónak dültve.	<i>P I</i> , 371–78  PIM V. 5498/22/I/1, fol. 247–54	
39.	(Ha íróasztalunkon három ... ijesztően szegényes leltára.)	<i>P I</i> , 383–84  PIM V. 5498/22/I/1, fol. 259	

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## Chapter 6

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| 40. | <i>Veronica and Ulva episode</i><br><br>Egy ilyen penzióban tisztán ...<br>forrását akarja elkerülni... | <i>P I</i> , 405–53<br><br>PIM V. 5498/22/I/2, fol. 16v–77v | An early addition written on the verso sides of the second copybook, probably in the spring or summer of 1932. The addition is almost equal to chapter 6 but it starts at the end of chapter 5. |
| 41. | Így telt meg ...<br>mint Leville-Touqué.”   | <i>P I</i> , 453–58<br><br>PIM V. 5498/22/I/2, fol. 78–83   | A continuation of addition 40 on separate pieces of paper.  |
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## Chapter 7

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| 42. | Kedves dolog ez az ...<br>nem azonos a<br>valósággal.  | <i>P I</i> , 465–67<br><br>PIM V. 5498/22/I/2, fol. 21–22  |  |
| 43. | <i>Leatrice and Halbert episode</i><br><br>Leatrice és Halbert ...<br>közző emberi formulái. | <i>P I</i> , 485–509<br><br>PIM V. 5498/22/I/2, fol. 37–60 | On the verso of folio 60, Szentkuthy wrote:<br>“(1–24. old. írtam 1934 február 14–19.)”<br>(I wrote pages 1–24 on 14–19 February 1934) |
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## Chapter 8

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| 44. | Mikor Halbert<br>megjelent ...<br>akar majd bekúszni.          | <i>P I</i> , 513–15<br><br>PIM V. 5498/22/I/2, fol. 63–65 |  |
| 45. | Fejükben egyrészt<br>állandóan ...<br>szűk a Don Juanokra.     | <i>P I</i> , 537<br><br>PIM V. 5498/22/I/2, fol. 88       |  |
| 46. | (Mindaz, ami itt ...<br>legtehetlenebb<br>tautológiája lehet.) | <i>P I</i> , 588–89<br><br>PIM V. 5498/22/I/2, fol. 130   |  |
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## Chapter 9

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| 47. | <i>Chapter 9</i>   | <i>P II</i> , 7–53              | Drafts to <i>P II</i> , 13–18 can be found in:<br>PIM V. 5498/23, fol. 7. |
|     | – Bocsásson meg,<br>de ...<br>így kezdődhetik<br>Leatrice. | PIM V. 5498/22/II, fol. 181–232 | Drafts to <i>P II</i> , 8–11 can be found in:<br>PIM V. 5498/23, fol. 9.  |
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## Chapter 10

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| 48. | Mikor Leatrice<br>nézte ...<br>az a bizonyos „nihil-<br>plasztika”?   | <i>P II</i> , 56–62<br><br>PIM V. 5498/22/II, fol. 236–38  |  |
| 49. | Leatrice-t azonban a<br>morál ...<br>logikában, etikában<br>egyaránt.   | <i>P II</i> , 57<br><br>PIM V. 5498/22/II, fol. 235  |  |
| 50. | vagyis minden<br>konkrét ...<br>limes reszkető<br>cérnarámáját  | <i>P II</i> , 61<br><br>The addition is written on a small<br>folio with no number. It is attached<br>to the following folio:<br>PIM V. 5498/22/II, fol. 238   |  |
| 51. | Az első természetes<br>reakció ...<br>éjszaka pusztító líróját?   | <i>P II</i> , 65–69<br><br>The addition is written on four<br>folios, which are not numbered,<br>except for numbers 1–4, which are<br>in Szentkuthy’s hand. It is attached<br>to the folio: PIM V. 5498/22/II,<br>fol. 240 |  |
| 52. | <i>Fourth Non-Prae-<br/>diagonal</i><br><br>(...Tudtam, hogy<br>reggel ...<br>tiltott babonát.<br>Megyünk...) | <i>P II</i> , 76–97<br><br>PIM V. 5498/22/II, fol. 243–65  |  |
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| 53.   | (ennek emlékét<br>őrizte ...<br>levegőben – missale<br>nivis);              | <i>P II</i> , 105–6<br><br>PIM V. 5498/22/II, fol. 271     |
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| 54.   | Most legközelebbi<br>jövőjére ...<br>korteskedés az „élet”<br>érdekében.)   | <i>P II</i> , 112–13<br><br>PIM V. 5498/22/II, fol. 275–76 |
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| 55.   | Ez egy fokkal<br>becsületesebb ...<br>»elaprózásról« és<br>paradoxonokról.” | <i>P II</i> , 119–120<br><br>PIM V. 5498/22/II, fol. 280   |
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## Chapter 11

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| 56. | <i>Fifth Non-Prae-<br/>diagonal</i><br><br>(... <i>Vajon? vajon?</i><br><i>nem ...</i><br><i>létezhetsz a világon...</i> ) | <i>P II</i> , 133–80<br><br>PIM V. 5498/22/II, fol. 288–338 |
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## Chapter 12

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| 57.   | (Egymás mellett:<br>Leatrice ...<br>vagy lehetetlenség<br>tartozik.) | <i>P II</i> , 184–85<br><br>PIM V. 5498/22/II, fol. 341    |
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| 58.   | A szerelem a nőnek<br>mindig ...<br>A szépség az utóbbi.             | <i>P II</i> , 186<br><br>PIM V. 5498/22/II, fol. 342       |
| <hr/> |  |  |
| 59.   | Az egész híd- és ...<br>gazdag térré válna?                          | <i>P II</i> , 192<br><br>PIM V. 5498/22/II, fol. 367       |
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| 60.   | Ennél azonban<br>sokkal ...<br>és sikktelen<br>meztelenség.          | <i>P II</i> , 193–97<br><br>PIM V. 5498/22/II, fol. 346–49 |
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| 61. | Mint az árnyék<br>valóságos ...<br>meg pszichológiai<br>árnyék. | <i>P II</i> , 198<br><br>PIM V. 5498/22/II, fol. 385 | The addition should be attached to folio 371. |
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| 62. | <i>Sixth Non-Prae-<br/>diagonal</i><br><br>(...Itt halászni!<br>Vajon ...<br>kigyók szépségét<br>dicséri...) | <i>P II</i> , 202–18<br><br>PIM V. 5498/22/II, fol. 350–66 |
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### Chapter 13

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| 63. | (A fiúnak életről,<br>álomról ...<br>igazi eltéréseket látott.) | <i>P II</i> , 223<br><br>The addition is written on a small<br>folio with no number. It is attached<br>to the following folio:<br>PIM V. 5498/22/II, fol. 375 |
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| 64. | szinte minden<br>tárgynál ...<br>skála többi számaival. | <i>P II</i> , 233<br><br>PIM V. 5498/22/II, fol. 380 |
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| 65. | Leatrice ágyában<br>ekkor ...<br>hanem valóban rend.) | <i>P II</i> , 234<br><br>PIM V. 5498/22/II, fol. 382 |
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| 66. | Tulajdonképpen<br>melyik is ...<br>lelkiismereti<br>küzdelmek<br>megszűnését. | <i>P II</i> , 257–63<br><br>PIM V. 5498/22/II, fol. 396–402 |
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| 67. | benne az érthetőség<br>helyettesíti ...<br>bizonyos „logika<br>antilogosz”). | <i>P II</i> , 269<br><br>PIM V. 5498/22/II, fol. 406 |
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| 68. | (Fontos a két dolog ...<br>értelmetlenség abszolút<br>panorámáját.) | <i>P II</i> , 269<br><br>PIM V. 5498/22/II, fol. 409 |
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| 69. | „Minden porcikámat<br>kitölti ...<br>– két különböző<br>dolog.” | <i>P II</i> , 272<br><br>PIM V. 5498/22/II, fol. 410 |
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| 70. | (ennek a mesterségesen<br>kaotizáló ... sokkal<br>szűzesebb,<br>tökéletesebb). | <i>P II</i> , 275<br><br>PIM V. 5498/22/II, fol. 413 |
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| 71. | a „máskor is” az idő ...<br>tartozó, szervetlen<br>tárgydarab. | <i>P II</i> , 293<br><br>PIM V. 5498/22/II, fol. 425 |
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#### Chapter 14

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| 72. | Mert hogy is ...<br>én? az nincsen. | <i>P II</i> , 306–7<br><br>PIM V. 5498/22/I/1, fol. 262 | The addition is placed at the end of the first copybook. |
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| 73. | Mikor valóságnak<br>hitték ...<br>van a „komplikáció”<br>helyén. | <i>P II</i> , 310–11<br><br>PIM V. 5498/22/II, fol. 3 |
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| 74. | Mintha a „hét óra” ...<br>ez a kongó vespera-<br>manőver. | <i>P II</i> , 312<br><br>PIM V. 5498/22/II, fol. 4 |
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| 75. | Tény és illúzió ...<br>akar különbséget tenni. | <i>P II</i> , 314<br><br>PIM V. 5498/22/II, fol. 6 |
|-----|--|--|
- 

- |     |   |  |
|-----|---|--|
| 76. | (olyanok, mint<br>levélbélyegek ...<br>nélküli fehér<br>ragasztószalagok) | <i>P II</i> , 315<br><br>PIM V. 5498/22/II, fol. 8 |
|-----|---|--|
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|-----|---|--|
| 77. | mikor már rég ... néma<br>bánya<br>keresztmetszetképén. | <i>P II</i> , 316<br><br>PIM V. 5498/22/II, fol. 9 |
|-----|---|--|
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|-----|---|---|---|
| 78. | míg mások az<br>etikában ...<br>különféle táplálékon<br>élni. | <i>P II</i> , 317–19<br><br>PIM V. 5498/22/II, fol. 11–13 | Drafts can be found in PIM V. 5498/23, fol. 10. |
|-----|---|---|---|
-

79.	(Ezalatt természetesen nem ... logikai eltoltságban kipuhatolni.)	<i>P II</i> , 325–26  PIM V. 5498/22/II, fol. 23	
80.	miképpen alakulhatott ki ... neuraszténiás abszolút önkínzása.	<i>P II</i> , 326–28  PIM V. 5498/22/II, fol. 17–19	Drafts can be found in PIM V. 5498/23, fol. 10.
81.	<i>Juanus Ethicus</i>  Amihez nyúlok, valóban ... érintettem. Materalizmus, materializmus.	<i>P II</i> , 329–30  PIM V. 5498/22/II, fol. 20–21	Drafts can be found in PIM V. 5498/23, fols. 7, 8.
82.	Ez is ad ... jogi hallucinatív erőm.	<i>P II</i> , 333–34  PIM V. 5498/22/II, fol. 24	
83.	Szépség és igazság ... önmaga zérus-magja felé.	<i>P II</i> , 335  PIM V. 5498/22/II, fol. 26	
84.	Morfín-komédiák és modern ... idő türelmetlen vizében.	<i>P II</i> , 338–339  PIM V. 5498/22/II, fol. 28–29	Draft and drawing can be found in: PIM V. 5498/23, fol. 11.
85.	Persze nyilvánvaló, hogy ... egészen érett a papságra.)	<i>P II</i> , 340  PIM V. 5498/22/II, fol. 31	
86.	A kompozíciókeresés egyik formája ... építészet a tér digitalisa.)	<i>P II</i> , 350–51  PIM V. 5498/22/II, fol. 36	Draft and drawing can be found in: PIM V. 5498/23, fol. 11.
87.	Néha, mikor az ember ... cél egyesítéséből elősködik.	<i>P II</i> , 361–62  PIM V. 5498/22/II, fol. 74	In the manuscript the addition is located in the place of addition 95.
88.	és éppen ezt ... mint igaz kórságot.	<i>P II</i> , 368  PIM V. 5498/22/II, fol. 46	

89.	Enciklopédikus gyűjtő- allegória és ... egyszer fixírozzuk a szalamandert.	<i>P II</i> , 368  PIM V. 5498/22/II, fol. 46	
90.	Az álom hogy látja ... mint valódi „kérdés”.	<i>P II</i> , 369  PIM V. 5498/22/II, fol. 48	
91.	Gomorrha és Greuze ... mint egy abszolút „otthon”.	<i>P II</i> , 373–80  PIM V. 5498/22/II, fol. 50–59	On the verso side of folio 53, Szentkuthy wrote: “1933. szept. 20. itt írtam először évek óta <u>bekezdést</u> , <u>új bekezdést</u> a ‘Prae’ szövegében!” (20 September 1933 for the first time since many years, I wrote here a <u>paragraph</u> , a <u>new paragraph</u> for the text of ‘Prae’!]  Draft can be found in PIM V. 5498/23, fol. 11.
92.	Egész prózai meggondolás ... lennie és iránytalannak.	<i>P II</i> , 392–93  PIM V. 5498/22/II, fol. 66	
93.	Erre ez lehet ... viszont az álarcos nő	<i>P II</i> , 398–99  PIM V. 5498/22/II, fol. 70	
94.	mikor az egyéniség tompulásáról ... tér a testek vizsgálatához	<i>P II</i> , 400  PIM V. 5498/22/II, fol. 70	
95.	Mert a kis érzések ... nap holtteste lappang.	<i>P II</i> , 405  PIM V. 5498/22/II, fol. 42	In the manuscript the addition is located in the place of addition 87.
96.	Ezt a szabályosságot így... ilyen csodáról stb.	<i>P II</i> , 407–9  PIM V. 5498/22/II, fol. 76–77	
97.	Beszéltem a mikroszkopikus ... nekem az ilyen aszfézist?)	<i>P II</i> , 420–24  PIM V. 5498/22/II, fol. 83–86	On the envelope of a letter from Dolly that arrived on the 23 <sup>rd</sup> of September 1933, Szentkuthy made a note about this addition: “betoldani irreális személyt (hisztéria = nagy hűtlenség ⇒) 45. old közepén” (Attach the unreal person (hysteria = great unfaithfulness ⇒) to the middle of page 45) (Dolly to Szentkuthy, 22 September 1933) In the manuscript of <i>Prae</i> we can see that he attached the addition according to his plan: PIM V. 5498/22/II, fol. 87.  Draft can be found in PIM V. 5498/23, fol. 11.



98.	(A számok biologizálása nevetséges ... és hullámzó voltát.)	<i>P II</i> , 440  PIM V. 5498/22/II, fol. 95	
99.	Az abszolút permutáció gondolata ... rács, Bernouilli- kubizmus a külvilágban.	<i>P II</i> , 441–42  PIM V. 5498/22/II, fol. 96	
100.	(A Bernouilli-levelek mutatták meg ... és nemzetközi utcanyelv.)	<i>P II</i> , 442	The addition was added during the correction of the proof in October 1933. PIM V. 5498/22 (Proofs of Halbert's father's diary), fol. 53.
101.	(Mindez a fentebb említett ... sejt-potpourri az álszámok érvényesülése.)	<i>P II</i> , 443  PIM V. 5498/22/II, fol. 98	
102.	(Ezeket a főljegyzéseket azzal ... határesetét éli át.)	<i>P II</i> , 451–53	The addition was added during the correction of the proof in October 1933. PIM V. 5498/22 (Proofs of Halbert's father's diary), fol. 58 (actually two folios, of which only one is numbered).
103.	Mielőtt a szépségnek ezt ... először érintkeztem hiveimmel.	<i>P II</i> , 454–55  PIM V. 5498/22/II, fol. 104	
104.	Talán mégis van ... csak, harmadik nincs.	<i>P II</i> , 455–64  PIM V. 5498/22/II, fol. 105–14	
105.	A végső kategóriák ilyen ... hely a másik kupében.	<i>P II</i> , 465  PIM V. 5498/22/II, fol. 115	
106.	De ettől a megszorítástól ... mikor a földhöz érne.	<i>P II</i> , 479  PIM V. 5498/22/II, fol. 123	

107.	A művészi szépség- élés legfontosabb ... reális egy ismert lehetetlenség.	<i>P II</i> , 491  PIM V. 5498/22/II, fol. 129	
108.	Első látásra akkor... líra? Karitás, karitás!	<i>P II</i> , 514–15  PIM V. 5498/22/II, fol. 437–38	The addition is placed at the end of PIM V. 5498/22/II (end of part 2). Its correct place should be PIM V. 5498/22/II, fol. 141.
109.	Az emberek tele vannak ... se létezett tudatosan.	<i>P II</i> , 516–19  PIM V. 5498/22/II, fol. 433–36	The addition is placed at the end of PIM V. 5498/22/II (end of part 2). Its correct place should be PIM V. 5498/22/II, fol. 141.
110.	egy óriási paplanra hímzett ... előbb adoptált testét:	<i>P II</i> , 532  PIM V. 5498/22/II, fol. 146	
111.	Ami azt illeti ... vizsgáljuk és élvezzük.	<i>P II</i> , 537–38  PIM V. 5498/22/II, 150v	
112.	(Nyakig vagyok a tautológiában ... menni, refrén- nekifutással.)	<i>P II</i> , 538–39  PIM V. 5498/22/II, 150v	The addition continues the previous one (no. 111), but since it is in different colored ink (blue, not black), I consider it a separate addition
113.	Tudósok és lírikusok ... „alig tudtam idejönni”!	<i>P II</i> , 542–45  PIM V. 5498/22/II, fol. 158–61	The addition is in the wrong place (it is between folios 157 and 167 when it should be attached to folio 152).
114.	Hogy beszéd és ... alig, beszédhez sehogy.	<i>P II</i> , 546–51  PIM V. 5498/22/II, fol. 162–66	The addition is in the wrong place (it is between folios 157 and 167 when it should be attached to folio 152).
115.	Egészen tiszta gesztus ... ortodox isteni magva.	<i>P II</i> , 559–60  PIM V. 5498/22/II, fol. 156	

### Appendix 3. Images

be nem men a szót egyenirigyet ön-nyomozás véglegesitani 52  
 nében az az oka, hogy nem így magán az ember ~~személyiség~~ ba-  
 nem valamilyen különféle kapcsolatukban van, különöz, di-  
 menzionalitáson nézve a környezeti világban: mintha egy túlkör-  
 terben lenne jama ~~személyiség~~ és különféle javak és a túlkörkép  
 nemcsak körül, hanem belül is van saját magával téve az  
 és valami, az univerzálisról is, tehát a logika és, miközben a jobb-  
 lalt nem a testek, hanem egy távoli képen lesz, ezáltal aha  
 je moditani. Mikor tehát a szót felvető, de a egy pillá-  
 ntra megfigyelt a szót az idegen, szinte ellenes ére-  
 miatt: saját maga olyan kapcsolatban volt a világokkal, közvel-  
 ké és vízzel, mint egy konvencionálisban a központi valóság  
 mesterséges, képfeljár, valahogy a lehetséges állapothoz képest  
 magát is a munka és nyelvet gondolat és tapasztalt közjének  
 de éppen ezt kapcsolatban volt velük, nem volt éppen szabad  
 központi és, mint az ismétlődés és, nem, ~~személyiség~~ és ismétlődés  
 ismétlődés. Szóval ez az egész. A szó mindig valami isme-  
 retlen, mielőtt bármi is megvalósulna, mint a természeti leg-  
 ives test: az a világ nem lehetetlen, az "önmagát" valahogy  
 kiemelve az egész, tehát az ~~személyiség~~ jelölése az idegen-  
 ségnek, de lehet, hogy maga az egész. Ennek a megfigyelt mit-  
 jöbék a természetét kell látni, - az talán az "önmagát" szemé-  
 tlenek feloldozása leg, amelyek alapján - de a egy átmenet - megindul  
 az intellektuális és jama a logika talán. Mikor tehát ezt a  
 képmintét vizsgált, megvalósult az a vége állapota a túlkörpiti táj-  
 kaja felé, a kompozit tenger, a túlkörpiti tenger és a tapasztalt  
 képmintét, el nem bűntőlítet, vizsgolt képmintét, mint egy jama  
 képmintét tenger vizsg - vizsg a másik jama megfigyelt a tú-  
 lkörpiti mitikus képmintét, levezetett közjének: valami  
 túlkörpiti megfigyelt, átírt, és, mint az talán, hogy saját  
 kompozit gondolatának, vizsgolt, konkrét konkrét vizsgolt  
 ki is a talán és, miközben vizsgolt a jama a megval-  
 képfelt tehát vizsgolt, túlkörpiti egy képmintét, tehát  
 egyenes intellektuális vizsgolt, valami felhatalmazás  
 az demonstrandum, ~~személyiség~~ állt ott - hisz a képmintén, mint az  
 eltérő állat: egyáltalán a szó mindig az a bizonyos  
 képmintét, hogy - jelen képmintét, vizsgolt a környezeti vizsgolt  
 képmintét, öre mellett, megfigyelt képmintét, vizsgolt a  
 képmintét, a képmintét, vizsgolt a képmintét. Szóval tehát  
 képmintét és, tehát, képmintét, vizsgolt a képmintét: a tenger  
 képmintét vizsgolt vizsgolt a képmintén, mintha az a fel-  
 vizsgolt volna, tehát vizsgolt a képmintét. Azt  
 még barmolító magamhoz és az az átkar: ezért vizsgolt  
 meg a vizsgolt vizsgolt, tehát is, miközben vizsgolt  
 képmintét, az átkar, tehát is, vizsgolt a képmintét  
 képmintét. Azt, vizsgolt vizsgolt, hogy ezt nem lehet képmintét  
 X) arcomon

Image 1 Page from the manuscript of *Prae*, first copybook (P I, 252, 257; see 4.4), PIM V. 5498/22/I/1, fol. 43r



Tulajdonképpen a szemem hármastappzáival, az érzékiesség alap-  
 alldijával állt szemben: látta Leatrice hátánál kéjét a tü-  
 köben, látta magát Leatricét (lár a "magát" jó nem olvas-  
 temül ezt a második ens-rolamot illeti meg) és végül lát-  
 ta az "idegen" vázát a kezében (lár az "idegen" jó nem bi-  
 to, hogy érvényes még ebben a jelenetben). Miféle viszony-  
 ban volt ez a három Leatrice, mely hiszen a váza is teste-  
 hez tartozott: a tülköbéli hát végtelenül tiszta ívke és az előt-  
 te sörnyed test kisgyőri rúfa egy éppenket két oldalit képezték?  
 Ez mozgásra redukált rúf-képlet, fényre-útrivított test-  
 tétel az egész, melynek vársztan értéke az az "idegennek" lát-  
 jó váza? Mi a test? Van-e értéke? Vajjon meg tudta-e  
 volna mondani, hogy az érzékiesség a három test között me-  
 fike váltotta ki tulajdonképpen: a reflex-e, az eleven-e vagy a  
 véletlen váza? A váza is organikusvá vált és az eleven Leat-  
 rice is optikai anyagára, amefen idegen nyaral társolnak,  
 úgynéppen feltartta: az érzékiesség nem a hiszt kívánság, ha-  
 nem a valósig polarizáció, hi-kör-fikaiság és a ráció  
 nem a tülköben olvasható Leatrice-leletet, hanem a ma-  
 gányos csókot képezte. Leatrice nem volt többé "éle" test" és  
 az érzékiesség nem volt többé "élet-energia". Mi történt? A  
 tülköben irdi hátat olyan tülközött könyveset vette kövül, me-  
 fés Tongue, alkli szemben volt a tülkövel, kermiszetesen erede-  
 fiben nem láthatott, úgyhogy a hát kéje olyan volt, mint-  
 ha álmódva azt, hiszen az álmóban szerepel egy jólismert  
 priza-csókú metekeli könyvesetben: a hisz színe, a  
 textil szívesre vársuet, úgynéppen a még yolsképre, meg  
 kövülvette, már nem: tapréta vizajok az életétes per-  
 peltiva, intuílus álom-íamával jötték vele szembe,  
 mintha egy minna ember egyjere a gondolatait ballaná  
 és viszhang formájában. Hátat érzékiessége és a tülköbéli  
 látható yolsarveisek rögtön vetéptársaléka lettek, mert hiszen  
 ugy látszott, hogy Leatrice rögtön alba a tülközés világba van  
 rendelve: egy reflex mindig idősebbnek látszik, mint egy  
 tárgy, a másodlagosság a véget pontos óra-omament-  
 kaja. Végül amefire átugram, sőt történelmi végig  
 Leatrice hátán a tülköben, anyira algebrikus volt  
 ezzel egyjere: mintha attól az egyjere tényleg, hogy a há-

Image 2 First page of addition 20 (P I, 252; see 4.4), PIM V. 5498/22/I/1, fol. 46r



petöfi Irodalmi  
Múzeum

! ~~Truf rindes siges' fall~~  
~~Vän köntvedveten dala~~  
~~leppa' dala' vidlar-~~  
~~less vaddat förtäskent~~  
~~Kp 28~~

4 Kent's  
Radicals  
Left as  
Spoken  
Vini

~~szőlő~~ megint az élet megerősítés  
~~Közelebb~~ hozzá  
ellen. Túl késő!

$$\begin{array}{r} 10.44 \\ \times 2.6 \\ \hline 6264 \\ 19680 \\ \hline 271.44 \end{array}$$

egy óra köfőzői emeleten - gyűjtemény  
 van ró, amelyek a felső vadkő-  
 emeletet az "epika" világra fektették,  
 a föld <sup>találatai</sup> - grónd az "élek"  
 magyarság földalatti, amely <sup>felelő</sup> <sup>előli</sup> <sup>~</sup>  
 a felette levő gyűjtemény magához van  
 fűzve. Ez azonban általában nem  
 sikerül, az "epika" vizsgálóján nem  
 tud átkelni a mélyre. Noha  
 azonban mégis lehet egy <sup>darab</sup> ~~széles~~  
 nyitóláncolat a földön az élet-  
 mel valóvala és valóban fixálta

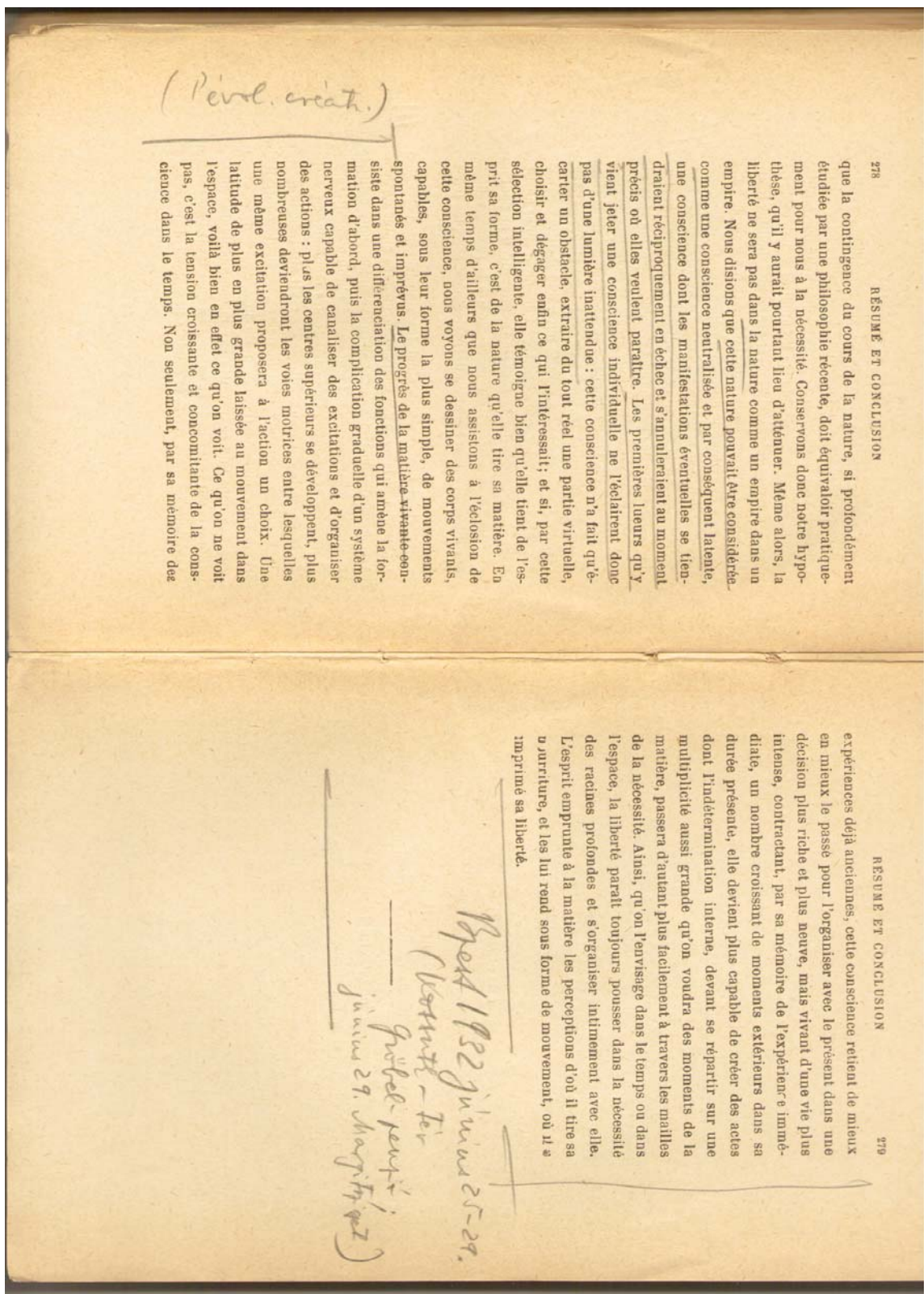
**Image 3** First draft to *Development of pain* (P I, 200–201; transcribed as draft 1 in 5.2), PIM V. 5498/23/1, fol. 1











**Image 6** Szentkuthy's marks and notes on the final pages of his copy of Bergson's *Matter and Memory* (see 2.2.1 and 6.2), Szentkuthy's library



gleich eine Abblendung des Möglichen als solchen. Die durchschnittliche Alltäglichkeit des Beforgens wird möglichkeitsblind und beruhigt sich bei dem nur »Wirklichen«. Diese Beruhigung schließt eine ausgedehnte Betriebsamkeit des Beforgens nicht aus, sondern weckt sie. Gewollt sind dann nicht positive neue Möglichkeiten, sondern das Verfügbare wird »taktisch« in der Weise geändert, daß der Schein entsteht, es geschehe etwas.

Das beruhigte »Wollen« unter Führung des Man bedeutet gleichwohl nicht ein Auslöschen des Seins zum Seinkönnen, sondern nur eine Modifikation. Das Sein zu den Möglichkeiten zeigt sich dann zu meist als bloßes Wü n s c h e n. Im Wunsch entwirft das Dasein sein Sein auf Möglichkeiten, die im Beforgen nicht nur unergriffen bleiben, sondern deren Erfüllung nicht einmal bedacht und erwartet wird. Im Gegenteil: die Vorherrschaft des Sich-vorweg-seins im Modus des bloßen Wü n s c h e n s bringt ein Unverständnis der faktischen Möglichkeiten mit sich. Das In-der-Welt-sein, dessen Welt primär als Wunschwelt entworfen ist, hat sich haltlos an das Verfügbare verloren, so jedoch, daß dieses als das einzig Zuhandene im Lichte des Gewünschten doch nie genügt. Das Wü n s c h e n ist eine existenziale Modifikation des verstehenden Sichentwerfens, das, der Geworfenheit verfallen, den Möglichkeiten lediglich noch nachhängt. Solches Nachhängen verschließt die Möglichkeiten; was im wünschenden Nachhängen »da« ist, wird zur »wirklichen Welt«. Wü n s c h e n setzt ontologisch Sorge voraus.

Im Nachhängen hat das Schon-sein-bei.. den Vorrang. Das Sich-vorweg-im-schon-sein-in.. ist entsprechend modifiziert. Das verfallende Nachhängen offenbart den Hang des Daseins, von der Welt, in der es je ist, »gelebt« zu werden. Der Hang zeigt den Charakter des Ausseins auf... Das Sich-vorweg-sein hat sich verloren in ein »Nur-immer-schon-sein-bei...«. Das »Hin-zu« des Hanges ist ein Sichziehenlassen von solchem, dem der Hang nachhängt. Wenn das Dasein in einem Hang gleichsam verfunkt, dann ist nicht lediglich noch ein Hang vorhanden, sondern die volle Struktur der Sorge ist modifiziert. Blind geworden, macht es alle Möglichkeiten dem Hang dienstbar.

Dagegen ist der Drang »zu leben« ein »Hin-zu«, das von ihm selbst her den Antrieb mitbringt. Es ist »Hin-zu um jeden Preis«. Der Drang sucht andere Möglichkeiten zu verdrängen. Auch hier ist das Sich-vorweg-sein ein uneigentliches, wenn auch das Überfallen vom Drang aus dem Drängenden selbst kommt. Der Drang kann die jeweilige Befindlichkeit und das Verstehen über-

**Image 7** The concept of *Sich-vorweg-im-schon-sein-in...* underlined in Szentkuthy's copy of Heidegger's *Being and Time* (see 2.2.2., 5.3, and 6.4), Szentkuthy's library

think in the way which, for want of a better word, we describe as mathematical. And while much in it may be hostile to the material appendages of life, much also is akin to the fundamental activities of life; we are not so much strangers or intruders in the universe as we at first thought. Those inert atoms in the primordial slime which first began to foreshadow the attributes of life were putting themselves more, and not less, in accord with the fundamental nature of the universe.

So at least we are tempted to conjecture to-day, and yet who knows how many more times the stream of knowledge may turn on itself? And with this reflection before us, we may well conclude by adding, what might well have been interlined into every paragraph, that everything that has been said, and every conclusion that has been tentatively put forward, is quite frankly speculative and uncertain. We have tried to discuss whether present-day science has anything to say on certain difficult questions, which are perhaps set for ever beyond the reach of human understanding. We cannot claim to have discerned more than a very faint glimmer of light at the best; perhaps it was wholly illusory, for certainly we had to strain our eyes very hard to see anything at all. So that our main contention can hardly be that the science of to-day has a pronouncement to make, perhaps it ought rather to be that science should leave off making pronouncements: the river of knowledge has too often turned back on itself.

1933 J. J. W. 14-15.

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Image 8 Szentkuthy's marks and notes on the final page of his copy of James Jeans's *The Mysterious Universe* (see 2.2.3 and 6.3), Szentkuthy's library